

THE
BEAUTIES OF GENLIS;
BEING A
SELECT COLLECTION
OF THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL TALES
AND
OTHER STRIKING EXTRACTS,

FROM
ADELA and THEODORE; The TALES of the CASTLE;
The THEATRE of EDUCATION and SACRED DRAMAS.

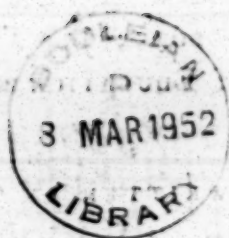
WRITTEN BY THE
COUNTESS OF GENLIS.

THE THIRD EDITION.

D U B L I N:

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M.DCC.XCI.



TO HER GRACE

The DUTCHESS of LEINSTER.

MADAM,

IN looking among the Good and the Great, I cannot find one to whom this Work can with more Propriety be dedicated than yourself—It has been too much the Custom for Addressees of this Nature to teem with hyperbolical Panegyric; but were I to write the Truths of your Character, those who have the Happiness of your Acquaintance, would know I said too little, while the Million, who cannot be admitted to that Honour, would think I said too much.

The Works of the COUNTESS OF GENLIS have a moral Tendency infinitely beautiful—they

—“ Pour Instruction on the tender Mind,

“ And teach the young Idea how to shoot.”

Inspired by an honest Wish to be of some Service to the rising Generation, I present this Work to the Public—The Poet says,

“ Just as the Twig is bent, the Tree’s inclin’d.”

and we have the excellent Example in the Daughters of LEINSTER.

I have presumed to adorn this Volume with your Name, and I did it without the Formality of Permission, being well assured it is your Delight to promote every Undertaking which has the Establishment of Virtue for its Principle.

B. DORNIN.

THE
HISTORY
OF
CECILIA,

THE BEAUTIFUL NUN.

FROM ADELAIDE and THEODORE, OF LETTERS
ON EDUCATION.

LETTER I.

*From the Baroness d'ALMANE to the Viscountess de
LIMOURS.*

I AM now going, my dear friend, to entrust you with a commission, in the success of which I am certain you will be happy. I believe I have already informed you, that a sister of Madame de Valmont has devoted herself to God. But before I explain my wishes, I will give you the history of this unfortunate Nun. M. d'Aimeri has had four children. Cecilia, the youngest, was only three years old when she lost her mother. She was educated in a country convent, which she never left till the age of thirteen, when she was invited to be present at the wedding of her eldest sister, Madame d'Olcy, who soon after went to reside in Paris. Cecilia continued at her father's paternal seat, with her second sister, who was three years older than herself, and who some time after was married to M. de Valmont. This gentleman, at the end of two years, was obliged to settle in Languedoc. Madame de Valmont loved her sister

A

with

with a tenderness, which her exquisite beauty, fine understanding, amiable manners, and above all, the misfortune of being the object of her father's aversion, had rendered still more lively and endearing. The night before the departure of Madame de Valmont the two sisters passed together, giving way to all the effusions of a grief, that flowed from the mutual excess of sensibility and affection. When the morning appeared, Cecilia, with tears streaming down her cheeks, threw herself into her sister's arms, and pressing her to her bosom: 'O my only comfort,' she exclaimed, 'my only friend, shall I lose you then so soon? Without you what will become of me? Who now will be my advocate with my father? Who now will endeavour to soften his obdurate heart? You—you only loved the wretched Cecilia—O my sister, my sister, and do you desert me?—What—what now will be my fate?'—The unhappy Cecilia, indeed, had but too much cause to give way to these terrifying fears. No sooner had her sister left the house, than her father sent back the lovely victim of his aversion to the nunnery in which she had been educated. She was but sixteen when she re-entered these gloomy cloisters, and—never more to leave them!—M. d'Aimeri, intent alone on aggrandizing the fortunes of an only son, repaired immediately to Paris; and, some months after, it was intimated to Cecilia, that she had no other alternative than to take the veil. The gentleness, and even timidity of her temper, not permitting her to oppose the commands of a despotic father, she obeyed without resistance, and without a murmur. Already, however, her heart was no longer her own. She loved—and in return was passionately adored. Yet blind to the nature of the tender sentiment that triumphed in her vestal soul, the beautiful novice, in renouncing the world, fancied that her sister only was the object of her regret; and while Love was in reality the source of the incessant tears she shed, she imputed them solely to the tender recollections of friendship. The chevalier de Murville, a young gentleman nearly related to M. d'Aimeri, was the

the object of this unfortunate passion ; and he possessed, indeed, all the virtues and accomplishments that could inspire an unbounded esteem. His mother, who for many years had retired from the world, lived on a small estate, about thirty miles from the convent where the hapless Cecilia was immured. In the mean time, the year of her noviciate is near expiring, and soon the day arrives, when Cecilia must utter the fatal and irrevocable vow ! That very day her inhuman father celebrates at Paris the nuptials of his son, and riots in transports of joy, while his unhappy daughter, in all the bloom of seventeen, consummates her dreadful sacrifice.—And now all is over ; Cecilia resigns the world for ever ; and the gloomy walls that inclose her, are henceforth to her the limits of the universe !

The very evening of her profession, a man on horseback came to the convent, and desired to communicate a message to her from Madame de Murville, on business of the utmost moment. Being introduced into the *parlour**, this man, with a letter in his hand, informed her, that a servant of Madame de Murville's had set out the day before, with express orders to deliver that letter the same evening, but that six miles from the convent he had the misfortune to fall from his horse, and break his thigh ; that, being taken up senseless, he was conveyed by some countrymen to the house of the farmer who was giving this account ; that he did not recover his recollection till the next day in the afternoon, when he committed the letter to his care. The farmer then presented the letter to Cecilia, who instantly retired into her chamber to read it. She opened it with an agitation, that became more violent still, when she perceived the signature of the Chevalier de Murville. This letter, which Cecilia thought it her duty to send to her sister,

* *The word Parlour is most commonly applied, in the French language, to the room appropriated in all Nunneries, for the admission of persons who have any business to transact with the Sisters.*

and which Madame de Valmont permitted me to copy, was as follows :

‘ S————— Castle, *May 15.*

‘ To-morrow!—Can it be to-morrow?—How can I utter these dreadful words?—O Cecilia, it is no longer right to dissemble—and have you never read my heart?—Alas! Once there were happier times, when I could even presume to hope that yours was not insensible. I opened my whole soul to the barbarian who would sacrifice you. He deprived me at once of every hope, and I condemned myself to silence. Oh! could I have foreseen the vile tyranny he intended to exert, never—never, Cecilia, should you have been the victim of it. In spite of your unrelenting father, in spite of the family that abandon you, and even in spite of yourself, I would have found means to rescue you from this cruel destiny. But far distant from you—in a foreign country—I knew not—I could not divine, that such injustice was intended. A letter having been sent, to inform me that my mother was dangerously ill, I instantly quitted Spain; but what accumulated misfortunes awaited my return! I find my mother at the last extremity, and I hear that Cecilia is soon to make her vows. Till this moment I never knew to what excess I love you. Dear injured excellence! Nature and Friendship betray you; but Love still is faithful. In me—in me alone shall you find the dear relations of father, friend, and brother. I will be your defender, your deliverer, and, O my Cecilia—your husband. Since you are still free, you are mine. Your relations have dissolved the tender ties that united you, and now you are mine—you are wholly mine. Yes! I swear from this moment to devote my life to you; and this sacred engagement, be assured, is far more agreeable to the Supreme Being than the inhuman vows you are preparing to make. Ah! pity me, that I cannot fly to you this instant—if you knew how much it cost my heart—but my dying mother—were I capable of abandoning her in this awful moment, could I now be worthy of you? In the mean time—if this letter cannot dis-

suade

suade you from your dreadful purpose—I tremble—the mere idea distracts me.—Hear me, Cecilia—I still respect the cruel author of your being—you are free—but if you are weak enough to obey him, from that instant I will never more recollect him as your father—I will regard him only as a detestable tyrant—and at least I will not die unrevenged. For his own sake, therefore, dare disobey him, or the trembling hand that writes to you, this hand, guided by hatred and despair, will pierce to the heart the monster that would sacrifice you. Let him reserve all his fortune, all his tenderness for his son; let him disinherit you. Let him give me my Cecilia, only, and I shall be the most respectful, the most grateful, and the happiest of his children. Alas! dearest, loveliest of women, I have avoided you; I have attempted to forget you; but these vain efforts have only served the more forcibly to convince me that I can never live without you. I dare presume, that your confidence in me is such, that you will not scruple to commit your honour and reputation to my care. All I desire is, that you will have the courage to declare, that you can never bring yourself to make your vows. Leave the rest to me—I will not see you, but to lead you to the altar, where the most sacred, the most delightful ties shall unite us for ever. I can depend on the person to whom I confide this letter; I am certain you will receive it this evening; and I cannot believe that you will be insensible to the intreaties of the man who so passionately adores you—yet a dreadful weight oppresses my heart, and my tears profusely flow. O Cecilia, my adoreable Cecilia, pity my distracted situation, and do not prepare for yourself a lasting bitterness of soul.—I impatiently expect your answer, as the decree that will determine my fate for ever.

The Chevalier de MURVILLE.

Imagine, if possible, the distraction of the unfortunate Cecilia, when she had read this letter. She perceives not that she is beloved, and that in a manner so ardent and affecting, nor does she discover her own sentiments,

timents, but in the very moment that she is irrevocably engaged. Some hours sooner this letter might have effected a happy revolution; it might have secured the felicity of her life, but now it only adds to the poignancy of her woes—Cecilia is at once motionless and stupid; overcome by the oppressing agitations of surprise, consternation, and despair. A sudden paleness overspreads her features; and a death like coldness seems to freeze her heart. Deprived of the power of reflection, she yet perceives indistinctly all the horrors of her situation; she perceives that now there remains no hope for her but in death. At length, gradually recovering from this state of stupefaction, she looks wildly on all around. Alas! whatever she beholds can picture only the distressing scene of her sacrifice and misery. Casting her eyes on the table, where lay her long and beautiful tresses, cut off that very morning*, she trembles at the sight. An undescribable impulse of passion, mingled with terror, regret, and fury, distracts her soul, and disorders her reason. Rising precipitately, she exclaims: ‘What then!—is there no means of emerging from the frightful abyss into which they have plunged me?—Cannot I escape from it—cannot I fly?—But what do I say? Great God! What an impious transport!—O wretched Cecilia, here must thou die!’—Then sinking again into her chair, and weeping bitterly, she once more takes her lover’s fatal letter—she peruses it again—Every word, every expression of that affecting letter is a mortal wound to her heart.—Her imagination pictures to her whatever can heighten her anguish and despair. She fancies her lover furious, breathing nothing but vengeance, and longing only for death. She sees her father bleeding by her lover’s hand—or her lover dying by his. These gloomy ideas impress her whole soul with horror. Less beloved, she would have had less to apprehend. Yet, when she imagines that one

* *A novice, on the day of her profession, has her hair cut off the very moment before she makes her vows.*

day the Chevalier will not fail to receive consolation, she finds the thought insupportable. At last, having determined to answer his letter, she wrote the following lines :

‘ Your letter is come too late. Cecilia no longer lives for you. Forget me—be happy---and respect my father.’

The Chevalier de Murville received this billet in the very moment that his mother had breathed her last. Nature could not support such variety of woe. A raging fever, attended by a delirium, brought him in a few days to the borders of the grave. From this illness, however, though severe and lingering, he recovered ; and scarce was he pronounced out of danger, than he employed himself in settling his affairs, with an intention to leave his country for ever. In passing through Languedoc, he stopt at the house of Madame de Valmont, who had always expressed the sincerest friendship for him. He desired to speak to her in private, and being introduced into her closet, he finds her alone. She flies to him—embraces him—and bursts into tears. He imagines, from this, that she had been informed of his unhappy passion by Cecilia herself. Nor is he deceived in this conjecture ; and he conjures Madame de Valmont, with such moving earnestness, to shew him the letter, that my sympathizing friend cannot refuse it. It is as follows :

‘ C————— Abbey, *June 12.*

‘ I still exist—but I have been near the period of my sufferings. I have been in view of that peaceful heaven, where the weary are at rest. Funeral tapers surrounded my bed, and a priest was exhorting me to die the death of the righteous. Alas ! how unnecessary was this holy care ! Why did not the good man rather teach me to support existence ?—O my sister, in what an awful moment did I know my heart !—The very day—I tremble—read the letter I enclose—it will tell you all. This letter, which I commit to your care, is the last sacrifice I have to make !—Cruel sacrifice !—This dear letter—let me weep a moment over it—I shall never see it more ! But every word—every sentiment it expresses is engraved

for ever on my soul. Preserve it, O my sister—if you love me, preserve it always. Since it is no longer lawful for me to keep it, let me have the consolation at least of thinking that it exists. Let it be dear to you. Remember that my being deprived of it is to me, what the absence of the most beloved object would be to you! If you knew how painful it is thus to tear myself from it—alas! in every thing now is your wretched sister guilty—even in the confession of the sorrows that distract her! Insupportable constraint, which can only produce the last excesses of despair! You know my whole heart—you know I ever delighted in virtue. But ah! you would tremble with horror, were I to repeat all the shocking ideas, that for three weeks past have disturbed and darkened my imagination. Guilt incessantly haunts me. In the most common objects, and indifferent actions, I view the dreadful subjects of temptation. When I walk in our melancholy gardens, trembling, my eye measures the height of the walls, and a thousand times I conceive the mad, the guilty idea of escaping over them. For some time after my recovery, when at table, how often have I been distracted by a most horrible thought!—The knife that lay near me—I cannot speak it—O heaven! Is it possible that a heart once so pure, can now be abandoned to such impious thoughts! O think that the most cruel of my tortures are the sentiments of remorse by which I am torn! Sometimes, all in tears, I implore with confidence the mercy and assistance of the Divine Being. As I cannot sacrifice the passion that subdues me, I present to Him the sufferings it inflicts, and I pray for resignation to enable me to endure them without a murmur. I then experience the only consolation of which I am susceptible; and some celestial spirit seems to whisper these divine words: ‘Let happiness still be thine. The passions interrupt or destroy it. Religion and Virtue only can render it immortal.’—For some moments I listen to the heavenly voice—all is calm and serene within, and with an ineffable fervour I exclaim:

‘O Grace

‘ O Grace divine ! O virtue heavenly fair !
 Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care !
 Fresh-blooming Hope, gay daughter of the sky !
 And Faith, our early immortality !
 Enter, each mild, each amicable guest ;
 Receive and wrap me in eternal rest !’

‘ But ah ! how fugitive are these divine consolations ! Other moments return, when I pronounce myself too guilty, ever to hope for the pardon of such repeated offences ; and I sink into all the anguish that discouragement and terror can excite. Forgive, my sister, these sad complaints—you never more shall hear them—henceforth I will respect the rigorous duty that condemns me to silence—I will trouble you no more with my sufferings nor with the object—And you, my sister, O never mention his name. You will see him without doubt, and perhaps you will see him comforted—yet his letter is so ardent—think you that time and the dissipations of the world will be able to destroy a passion so deeply rooted and so sincere ?—Ah ! If you think so, tell it not to me—you will tear open my poor heart afresh. The hope of living sometimes in his recollection, is the only satisfaction that can now reconcile me to life. My greatest misery—I will confess it to you—is to think he knows not how much I love him—Yes, if he knew my heart, never—never would he forget me. Perhaps he thinks me insensible, ungrateful—O conceal from him this wildness of passion—but, my sister—will you permit him to accuse me of ingratitude ?—Gracious God ! What do I hear ? The passing bell summons me—it announces the last agonies of one of our sisters !—Happy happy soul—soon will she be at rest—God will wipe away all tears for ever from her eyes.

‘ For her th’ unfading rose of Eden blooms,
 And wings of Seraphs shed divine perfumes,
 For her the spouse prepares the bridal ring,
 For her white virgins hymenæals sing,
 To sounds of heavenly harps she dies away,
 And melts in visions of eternal day.’

‘ Adieu, my dearest sister. I enclose my hair in this packet—that hair which your hands have so often adorned. You will not see these locks without emotion. These mournful relics, when they bring to your remembrance my hapless fate—my tender friendship for you, may, perhaps, obtain your indulgence and compassion—the only comforts that now remain to the unfortunate

CECILIA.’

The Chevalier de Murville, after having read this letter, threw himself at the feet of Madame de Valmont, entreating her to grant him the dear tresses of his adorable Cecilia. He protested vehemently, that if she refused him this last consolation, he would never quit his country, without revenging himself on M. d’Aimeri. His agitation and menaces so terrified Madame de Valmont, that she did not long hesitate to grant what he so earnestly desired. She gave him the casket that contained her sister’s hair. The Chevalier received it on his knees—trembling, he opened it—impatient, yet dreading to view those long and beautiful locks, that had once adorned the head of the hapless Cecilia. A sudden paleness, and a most expressive silence, bespoke for some moments the violent workings of his soul. Then closing the casket, and pressing it to his heart: ‘ Adieu, Madam,’ said he, ‘ adieu for ever—I now quit a country that I abhor, and that I shall never revisit. You will never hear of me again, till you recover the precious treasure you confide to me, and nothing but death shall tear me from it. When I am no more, it shall be restored to you!’—With these words, without waiting for an answer, he hastily left the room. Since that time he has never once been heard of—we are absolutely ignorant of his fate. But as Cecilia’s hair has not yet been restored to Madame de Valmont, it is probable that the poor Chevalier still exists—he lives unknown perhaps, in some corner of the world. As to M. d’Aimeri, Heaven delayed not to punish him for his cruelty. His son, immoderately addicted to gaming and bad company, soon lost his character, ruined his constitution, encumbered his fortune,

fortune, and, at the end of three years after his marriage, died without children. M. d'Aimeri, who honourably discharged all his son's debts, retired with a fortune very much diminished, to the house of his second daughter Madame de Valmont. Her son, the young Charles, he most tenderly loves, and to him, it is said, intends to leave the remains of his fortune. To return to Cecilia, I have the pleasure to assure you, that time and reason have insensibly triumphed over her unhappy passion. In the sublime consolations of Religion, she now gathers the delicious fruits of unaffected piety—Resignation and Peace. That genuine piety, indeed, which never reaches perfection but in Heaven, is such a copious source of satisfactions, that it enriches with them the commencement of virtue, its progress, and its consummation. Our beautiful votary, in course, in fervour of devotion and sweetness of temper, is become a pattern to her companions; and, were her health but unimpaired, I should not conceive a more enviable object.

‘ How happy is the blameless vestal's lot;
 The world forgetting, by the world forgot!
 Eternal sun-shine of the spotless mind!
 Each prayer accepted, and each wish resign'd;
 Labour and rest, that equal periods keep!
 Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep;
 Desires composed, affections ever even;
 Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to Heaven.
 Grace shines around her with sereneest beams,
 And whisp'ring angels prompt her golden dreams.’

But, alas! the severe distresses that had so long distracted her, have at length produced the most alarming symptoms; the austerities of her profession have concurred no less to impair her health; and, for six months past, the sweet saint has been apparently in a decline. Madame de Valmont is earnestly desirous that she should take a journey to Paris, in order to consult the most celebrated Physicians. For this purpose it will not be difficult to obtain the permission of the Lady Abbess.—And now, my dear friend, let me communicate to
 you

you my commission. It is to request that you will repair to Madame d'Olcy, and prevail upon her to receive her in her house for two or three months. It will doubtless appear very extraordinary to you, that as Madame d'Olcy is the sister of Cecilia and of Madame de Valmont, the latter should charge you with this commission. It is therefore requisite to give you some idea of this lady's character. In the immense fortune she possesses, she finds no consolation for being the wife of a farmer of the King's revenue. Not having the good sense to be superior to this weakness, she suffers so much the more from it, as she only converses with the dependents of the Court, and that every conversation, in course, perpetually reminds her of the misfortune for which she secretly grieves. In other respects, she is sufficiently compensated in all the considerations that one may suppose to result from a noble house, a magnificent style of living, and boxes in the theatres. But she is incapable of forming a tender attachment of friendship, or of enjoying any of the pleasures that encircle her. She never forms a judgment but after the opinion of others; and to all this absurdity of character she unites arrogant pretensions to superior sense, with much fantastic humour, and insipidity of deportment. Though she prides herself much in being the daughter of a man of family, she has never evinced the least affection for her father—for he has retired from the service and from the world, and from him she expects no increase of fortune. She has not a greater partiality to Madame de Valmont, whom she regards as a mere country lady; and she has doubtless forgotten that she has a sister, who has consecrated her days to Religion. You see, therefore, that your assistance is very necessary. I enclose a letter from Madame de Valmont; you will present it to Madame d'Olcy; you will express an anxious interest in the concerns of the two sisters; and I am certain that we shall obtain from the vanity of this silly woman, what we might in vain expect from her heart.—Adieu, my dear friend: it is time to finish this letter, the length of which you will surely

surely pardon, for the sake of the affecting history of the beautiful Cecilia.

In the following Letters, this interesting History is thus continued.

LETTER II.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

I HAVE the happiness to inform you, my dear friend, that Cecilia arrived here yesterday. She is, indeed, every thing you have described her, lovely and engaging beyond expression; and Charles, her nephew, bears a most striking resemblance of her. The whole family are come to spend a week with us. You may imagine how anxiously I wished to be present at the interview between the sweet votary and her father; and never have I seen any thing that has affected me so much. M. d'Aimeri waited for the approaching moment with a mixture of terror and impatience. He rose yesterday before day-break; and, when he came to our house, I could easily perceive, from his countenance, what a restless night he had passed. After dinner, Madame de Valmont, M. d'Aimeri, and myself, set out in our carriage, to meet Cecilia. M. d'Aimeri was pale and trembling; and, it was evident that he laboured under the most cruel constraint. He avoided our looks, and seemed desirous of concealing from us the internal agony that devoured him. I could see, in the bottom of his soul, how much he dreaded the impressions, with which the affecting sight of his victim might inspire us; and that he was apprehensive, that the presence of Cecilia would destroy all the compassion we had felt for him. So long as we are flattered with the idea of deeply interesting others, while we permit them to see the remorse that preys upon our minds, we love to dwell upon it openly; but when we lose

lose this hope of exciting the tender emotion of pity, we are equally solicitous to conceal our sorrows and our anguish; and we imagine, that while we thus conceal them, we diminish, in the estimation of others, at least a part of our guilt. We had hardly proceeded six miles, when suddenly Madame de Valmont, perceiving a carriage at a distance, exclaimed, 'Ah! my sister!' M. d'Aimeri alternately turned pale and red; and, seeing that Madame de Valmont was weeping, he said to her, with a severe aspect, but trembling voice, 'What, Madam, are you going to act a tragedy?'—Surprised with this harsh behaviour, and still more so with a look, that had something gloomy, savage, and distracted in it, Madame de Valmont wiped away her tears, without being able to divine the motive for such caprice. Presently, the carriage we had seen approaches and stops; I pull the coach string of mine; M. d'Aimeri, hardly capable of supporting himself, alights; at this instant, I hear an affecting cry, which, doubtless, pierced the unhappy man to his very soul; and, almost in the same moment, Cecilia, the charming Cecilia appears, springs towards her father, and sinks fainting within his arms. Thus folding his daughter—this injured daughter to his bosom, M. d'Aimeri sees no one but her; even his remorse—his sorrows are suspended: Nature resumes all her power in his heart; he sheds a flood of tears; he calls her by the most tender names; his legs tremble—his knees totter under him; and he is just ready to faint himself. Madame de Valmont and I would fain support Cecilia; he pushes us aside; he snatches from Madame de Valmont the smelling-bottle with which she was attempting to revive her sister; he alone would revive her; he impatiently watches for the moment that she may open her eyes; he chides—he repulses all who would approach her; he seems apprehensive, in short, that we may steal from him the first look—the first notice of Cecilia.—But I will not attempt to describe the moving scene that followed, when that lovely creature recovered her senses. It is a picture, which it is impossible for me to delineate half so well

as

as I am sure you will imagine it. You will easily conceive the joy—the transports of Cecilia, in finding herself between her father and sister; the deep and painful sensations—the whole softened soul of Monsieur d'Aimeri; the extreme sensibility of Madame de Valmont; the warm concern with which this affecting group inspired me; and the earnest attention with which I observed all their motions. I particularly admire the delicacy of our amiable Cecilia. She certainly reads in the heart of her unfortunate father—she easily perceives the remorse that tortures him; and ever since yesterday she has been continually intent on her compassionate endeavours to console him indirectly, by affecting a more than ordinary cheerfulness and even gaiety, and by dwelling often on her delight in solitude; a delight, she says, which has been much augmented by every object she has seen in the fashionable world. She speaks with rapture of her Convent, and of the friends she has left there. M. d'Aimeri listens with avidity to these conversations; it is evident that he endeavours to persuade himself of their sincerity; and then he seems a thousand times more affectionate to Cecilia, as if to thank her for thus endeavouring to justify him to his own heart, and in the eyes of her surrounding friends.

For my part, I am convinced that Cecilia has indeed adopted an heroic resolution, and that she is entirely resigned to her melancholy fate. But, alas! she is now only twenty-seven; so beautiful still, and so young; with a soul susceptible of such tenderness; an imagination so lively—how can we hope that she will be ever entirely free from every kind of regret? I was walking in the garden with her some time this morning. The conversation turned on different subjects, and particularly on the beauties of this month. In a moment she sighed, and said, ‘This day is *the sixteenth of May*; it is now exactly ten years since I took my vows.’—These words were accompanied by a look that pierced my very soul, and which make a deeper impression still, from the emphasis with which she uttered these words, ‘*the sixteenth of*

of May! --- There was something, indeed, in her manner, that seemed mournfully, and even ominously alarming. However, she shifted the conversation, and appeared instantly to resume her wonted serenity. But Madame de Valmont and I have both agreed, that it is requisite, particularly to-day, to procure her some amusement, that may banish from her mind, if possible, this dreadful recollection of '*the sixteenth of May*.' Accordingly, we shall all pay a visit in the afternoon to Nicola, a happy young farmer's beautiful wife, and her pretty family. The delightful situation of her house, and the uncommon neatness of every thing within, render it a most pleasing habitation; and really, in this sweet season, her garden well deserves a visit. You, who are so fond of natural streams, rural verdure, and rural flowers, would find it infinitely more agreeable than all the imitations of English gardening, that are inclosed within the walls of Paris.

• L E T T E R III.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

I HAVE been a long time, my dear friend, without writing to you; but since my last letter I have been witness to a most melancholy scene, the deplorable consequences of which have so uncommonly affected me, that in the first impressions they left upon my mind, I was not capable of communicating those particulars, which I knew you would be anxious to know, when you were informed that they relate to the unfortunate Cecilia. Oh! how much now is that lovely woman to be pitied! You will judge yourself, whether in any of the trying scenes she had formerly experienced, she was more worthy than at present of exciting your compassion. I mentioned, in my last letter, the expression that had dropped from her, recollective of her profession on '*the sixteenth of May*;' an epocha, that is now doubly fatal
for

for her! I added, that in order to divert her from this idea, we had proposed a ride to Nicola's farm. We set out, accordingly, at five o'clock in the afternoon. M. d'Aimeri, M. and Madame de Valmont, Cecilia, M. d'Almane, Charles, Theodore, and myself were in the same landau: I thought I could perceive, while we were in the carriage, that Cecilia paid very little attention to the conversation. She seemed wholly absorbed in the contemplation of the beauties of the country, and of the variety of enchanting landscapes that opened at every view. A sigh, escaping from her now and then, in spite of herself, seemed to say, 'Ah! how happy are they, who are not like me, deprived of the pleasure of always admiring this delightful scene!'—At length, we had approached about five hundred paces of Nicola's habitation. M. de Valmont then proposed, that we should proceed to the house on foot, in order, he said, to surprise these good people in the midst of their household occupations. Pleased with this idea, we alighted, and, having crossed a fine meadow, we entered a walk of willow-trees, that led to the house. This was a neat cottage, covered with thatch, in the midst of a spacious garden, surrounded by a hedge of flowering thorn. All around was one beautiful landscape. Here hung fruits of exquisite taste, and there little streams of transparent water crossed in serpentine play the scented walks of turf, where violets and wild thyme were profusely scattered; and a thousand other pleasing objects concurred to render this rural habitation one of the most charming, that Fancy could conceive. Theodore runs before us, opens the door, and we all immediately enter. We find our favourite young woman, sitting between her mother and husband, her youngest child in her arms; her eldest girl is on her knees before her, careressing her little brother; while the second is standing by the side of her father, her face carelessly reclining on his shoulder. With what pleasure would we continue to contemplate this sweet picture of domestic union, and rural felicity! But they all rise, the moment they perceive us. Nicola bids her husband

husband gather some flowers, while her good mother is preparing to spread a table with the produce of their dairy. We admire the neatness and good order in which every thing is kept; we caress the children; while Nicola delights us, by dwelling on her happiness, and her affection for her family. Her husband soon returns with a basket of nosegays; they present us with flowers, fruits and cream; but while the good people are thus busily employed in entertaining us, M. d'Aimeri on a sudden observes, that Cecilia is not with us. He perceives her retired to the further end of the room. He approaches her. The unhappy Nun turns her head aside; yet she cannot conceal from him that she is pale and trembling, and that her face is bedewed with tears. She would speak, but her emotion deprives her of utterance. Her sister hastens to her, and Cecilia, in unspeakable confusion and despair, can only whisper her, in a voice broken by her sobbing, 'Take me, take me hence; I am dying.'—Madame de Valmont, equally surprised and afflicted, in vain endeavours to find some excuse for the situation of her hapless sister; her father had but too well perceived the reason. Incapable of supporting the dreadful sight, he suddenly seizes the young Charles by the hand, and, dragging him along, rushes precipitately out of the cottage. M. de Almane and M. de Valmont also instantly leave it, with a view to follow the wretched father, and accompany him home on foot. Cecilia we hurry, as soon as possible, from a spot so fatal to her peace, and help her into the carriage. She spoke not a single word the whole time we were returning to the Castle. Her head hung drooping upon her bosom, and her eyes were hardly open a moment. Affected by her distressing situation, I would have taken her hand to kiss it; but, with a gloomy pensive air, she withheld it; nor could I obtain one look expressive of her being in the least sensible to my tenderness; for one of the most fatal effects of despair, is in a manner to benumb the soul, to deprive it even of the faculty of feeling, and to render it insensible of the compassion it inspires. Cecilia, however,

however, has naturally so sweet a disposition, that she soon repented of this unkind deportment: and when we arrived at the castle, she pressed my hand, and embraced me with all the expression of the most grateful sensibility. As soon as I had left the two sisters alone, and at liberty to converse without restraint, Cecilia, anticipating the curiosity of Madame de Valmont, threw herself into her arms, and, bursting into tears, 'Learn my dear sister,' said she, 'all that has passed within my heart—this poor heart, that is pierced with a dart which death only can remove. Oh! what a sweet picture of happiness did I see in that cottage! I envied—I could not forbear to envy it. At that moment, a gloomy sentiment of repining took possession of my soul. I saw you smiling at the charming view of a felicity that in part reminded you of your own. To *you*, my sister, it was the most exquisite enjoyment; but to *me*—it only displayed, with a deeper horror, the wretchedness of my fate—it taught me to comprehend, in its whole dreadful extent, the cruel sacrifice I was compelled to make. Alas! this woman is encircled by her children—in the arms of an affectionate mother and a beloved husband—and I, unhappy that I am, deprived of my mother in my most tender years, banished by my father, and, condemned to oblivion and slavery, am forced to renounce the sweetest sentiments of nature!—Oh! my sister, whether did you carry me? Ought one to display the enchanting picture of happiness to the wretches who can neither enjoy, nor ever hope to obtain it? Ah! why was not I born of inferior rank, like this happy, happy woman? I too could have loved. This poor heart would then have been as innocent and pure, as it is fond and affectionate! Remorse, cruel remorse, would then have been unknown to me; and the very sentiments that now destroy my peace, would have ensured my felicity!'

Madame de Valmont could only answer by her tears, to these just and affecting complaints. However, when Cecilia, at length, appeared somewhat calmer, she did not fail to urge to her whatever reason and affection could

could suggest. Cecilia heard her with kindness and attention; she expressed the utmost anxiety not to afflict her father; she promised to banish, if possible, all desponding ideas; and to submit to her fate with that virtue and resolution which she had till then displayed. When her father returned, she went to meet him, and exerted herself so much, that she even spoke almost with pleasantry of the scene he had witnessed, attributing it to her being suddenly taken ill. M. d'Aimeri, whom M. d'Almane had brought back in a situation truly pitiable, began now to revive, and to hope that the impression which his unhappy daughter had received would have no permanent effects.

In the evening she sat down to supper, eat as usual, and was continually talking. In a word, she exerted herself to such a degree, that all but myself were deceived by her. I would much rather have seen her melancholy and pensive than lively and animated. I was convinced that she did great violence to her feelings; and besides, the unusual colour of her cheeks, the sparkling vivacity of her eyes, and a certain precipitancy that accompanied her every motion, all persuaded me that she was not without a fever. We retired to rest soon after supper; and I had hardly been in bed an hour, when I heard a gentle knocking at my chamber-door. I instantly rose, and found Madame de Valmont all in tears, who told me that her sister was in a violent fever, and quite delirious. I sent immediately to Carcassonne for a Physician, who did not arrive till five o'clock in the morning; when we thought it necessary to awaken M. d'Aimeri, whose rest we had till now been unwilling to disturb. We had been apprehensive, moreover, of the horror with which the sight of this unhappy daughter must have impressed him; for, exclusive of her dangerous situation, she was, in her delirium, continually calling upon the Chevalier de Murville; and, with tears, entreating him to see her once more before she died. At other times, when she seemed more composed, she would ask her sister what was become of him, and receiving only

ly her tears for answer, she would exclaim with terror, 'He is dead! He has been killed! My father has killed him!'—At these words, she was seized with dreadful convulsions, which disfigured her features, and seemed as if they would soon terminate her miserable life. In short, during these shocking deliriums, she discovered all the sentiments that had been locked up in her bosom for these ten years past. Judge of the situation of her father, on hearing these cruel speeches. He was struck with such horror, he was so overwhelmed by his distress, that he appeared insensible to what she said. Grief, when carried to a certain height, is seldom manifested by outward appearances: it crushes; it oppresses; it is dreadfully tranquil: for, being hopeless of consolation, it at once ceases to complain. In the mean time, the physician declared that Cecilia was in the most imminent danger, and that we should take advantage of the first lucid interval, in order to administer the Sacraments to her. At this awful sentence, M. d'Aimeri turned pale, and exclaimed, 'Her first lucid interval! And what—if she should die without one?'—It is impossible to give you any idea of the distress and horror that were visible in his countenance, when this unfortunate father pronounced these words. Penetrated with a lively sense of the sublime truths of religion, he saw himself at this moment, not only the author of his daughter's death, but the cause, perhaps, of her eternal condemnation*. Distracted, almost beside himself, he instantly sent for a Priest,

* *Irrational and unlovely must be that system of religion, which can inculcate the supposition, that the errors, and even the cruelty of a father, could draw down the vengeance of the All Merciful and All Good upon an innocent and virtuous daughter, unless charmed away by the expiating pomp of unctions, crucifixes, prayers, and flaming tapers: But the amiable Authoress of these Letters, perceives, as a good Catholic, the most 'sublime truths,' in the Ceremonies, which the laws of her country had established, and which the hand of Time had rendered venerable.*

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and made him wait the event in an adjoining chamber. In the evening, Cecilia, all at once, became more composed, and by degrees recovered her understanding. M. d'Aimeri then approached her bed, and embraced her. Cecilia, looking with astonishment on all around her, said, 'I have been very ill—am I out of danger?'—'We are under no apprehensions for your life,' answered M. d'Aimeri, 'but for the sake of your peace of mind, I have sent for a priest.'—'A Priest!'—ah! am I fit—no, I will not see him.'—'Why not, my child? Think of your situation!'—'Ah! my father, if you knew my heart!—No, no—I have lost all hope of pardon.'—Shuddering at these words, M. d'Aimeri looked at his daughter with eyes equally expressive of terror, surprise, and the most tender compassion.—'Oh! my daughter!' he cried, 'you plunge a dagger into my heart.—What! what have *you* to fear? Be composed. God will ever pardon an involuntary failing—No, thou hast nothing to reproach thyself with. Thou, alas! art the innocent victim only. I am the guilty—Yes,' continued he, 'falling upon his knees, thy wretched father only ought to endure these dreadful terrors. He only will be punished for every sigh that escapes thee, and for the horrors that fill thy broken heart. All thy errors will fall upon his guilty head.'—As he finished these words, Cecilia, almost choaked with tears, threw her arms round her father's neck, and, dropping her face on his: 'No more, no more,' said she, 'such cruel words! Grieve no longer for my fate. My father, my dear father, you love me—You now make amends for all—pardon the distraction of a moment—my poor heart, now restored to itself, shall henceforth be devoted only to God and you.—The Priest—where is he? Let him come. My dear father, assure yourself that he will find me full of resignation and hope. It is upon this hand, this dear hand, I now declare it. Be composed. If they can save me from death, I can yet be attached to life—I will live for your sake.'—She then desired Madame de Valmont to send the Confessor, and we all left the

the room. The same day she received the Sacraments; she slept tolerably well that night; in four and twenty hours she was pronounced out of danger, and, by the end of the week, was so well recovered, as to be able to return to Madame de Valmont's. She has now been gone a fortnight, in which time I have frequently seen her. She is very much altered, and extremely thin. But she says she is very well. We can perceive no alteration in her disposition. She is perfectly chearful in company. But I know her resolution, and the command she has over herself so well, that I greatly fear she is in a much more dangerous state than her friends imagine.—Adieu! my dear friend, let me know if your daughter's marriage with M. de Valce is still in agitation? From your last letter I flatter myself the treaty is at an end; for, if M. de Limours promised to take time to reflect on it, I doubt not but you will easily prevail on him to renounce it.

L E T T E R IV.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

WE have no longer any hopes of our amiable Cecilia. She is hastening very sensibly to the period of all her sufferings. It is now more than two months since she extorted a confession of her real danger from M. Lambert her physician; forbidding him, at the same time, with a generous anxiety, to communicate the fatal intelligence to her friends. Yesterday morning I received a note from her, written in her own hand, desiring me, if possible, not to lose a moment in coming to see her. I instantly obeyed the summons; and when I arrived at the Castle I found her alone; M. d'Aireri and Madame de Valmont being gone to pay a visit in the neighbourhood. She was seated in an arm chair, not having yet kept her bed a single day. I was quite shocked at her pale and languid appearance. She seem-
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ed, however, to revive at the sight of me, and desiring me to sit by her: 'Dear Madam,' said she, 'I know your sensibility. Let me assure you then, before I explain myself further, that no person in the world can be more perfectly happy than I am now.'—This affecting preface but too well prepared me for the awful circumstance she was going to disclose.—'Ah! cried I, 'has M. Lambert said?'—'I saw him this morning'—'And what, what did he say?'—'Ah! Madam, I must now bid you an everlasting adieu.'—At these words, some drops moistened her eye-lids; but for my part, I wept profusely. We were for some moments silent. At length Cecilia resumed: 'And what, Madam, does my happiness afflict you?'—'Ah! Cecilia! you deceived us then, when you assured us that you could wish to live!—'No, I did not deceive you. If it had been the Divine Will to prolong my exile here, I would have submitted to it without repining, and without regret. Since my last illness God has changed my heart, that heart which was once so weak—In Nicola's Cottage I received the blow that puts a period to my days. What I suffered then was beyond expression—you can have no idea of it. I detested existence; and yet I could not contemplate the approach of death, without inexpressible terror. In those dreadful moments I was sensible, that there can be no real fortitude without innocence and purity of soul. When my physician pronounced me out of danger, I felt an inward conviction, that I was then only rescued from the tomb, to be in a little time its certain victim. I was grateful for this delay---I made haste to profit by it. I reflected on my errors, and on the guilty illusion of all human passions. I ventured to address myself with humble confidence to God: he graciously heard my prayers, and restored peace and serenity to my wounded mind. He raised, he exalted my soul to himself: he became the sole object of all my affections, and of my dearest hopes.'—While Cecilia was thus speaking, I perceived her paleness vanish; her eyes had something of a divine animation in them; and her face was enlivened with
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a certain nobleness of expression, that was unspeakably affecting. The firm tone of her voice, the sweetness of her looks, and the majestic serenity of her countenance, led me insensibly from grief to admiration. I thought I saw, I thought I heard an angel. I looked at her with earnestness, I listened to her with reverence and awe. When she ceased to speak, I continued to regard her with a kind of ecstasy; and, to such a degree, was I affected, that for some time I was unable to speak. At length, she explained to me her reasons for wishing to see me alone. She entreated me to prepare her father and sister, with all possible tenderness, for an event, 'which' added she, 'I feel to be fast approaching.' You may imagine with what reluctance I undertook this commission, and with what painful emotions I performed it! M. d'Aimeri and Madame de Valmont had seen nothing in Cecilia's situation, but that weakness which is commonly the sequel of a severe illness. They had suffered themselves to be flattered by her youth, and by the air of satisfaction, which, in tenderness to her father, she had assumed; and they were absolutely ignorant of the symptoms which announced her situation to be so dangerous. However, as our anxiety for those we love, leads us easily from one extreme to another, M. d'Aimeri, from the very first words I uttered, seemed to anticipate his misfortune. But, as if he still wished to encourage a feeble ray of hope, he all at once ceased to question me; and, a moment after, he left me in order to go and shut himself up in his apartment. As to Madame de Valmont, she had so much difficulty to understand me, that I was obliged to repeat to her almost all the conversation that had passed between Cecilia and me. I remained with her till the evening. It is now three days since I saw her; and she writes to me, that there is yet no alteration in her sister; that M. d'Aimeri is overwhelmed with the most poignant grief; and that the only consolation of which he is now susceptible, is in the perfect resignation and angelic piety of Cecilia.—
Adieu, my dear friend: these scenes have so much distressed

treffed me, that I have been extremely ill. I shall go the day after to-morrow to Madame de Valmont's, and I will not fail to write to you the same evening.

LETTER V.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

ALAS!—she is no more—and oh! to what a scene have I been witness!—The unfortunate M. d'Aimeri, he—he only is now the object of compassion!—Ah! if Heaven thus punishes with such severity a single fault, irreparable indeed, but expiated for ten years with unceasing sorrow—what have not those unnatural parents to dread, who endeavour to harden themselves in all the atrociousness of injustice? My heart is so affected with what I have seen to-day, that I can think, I can speak of nothing else. Hear then the melancholy recital: It shall be faithful and true; and I can hardly fail of communicating to you a part of the sad impressions it has left on me.—I came this forenoon to Madame de Valmont's: I found the whole family in the utmost consternation. They told me that Cecilia had been taken so ill in the night, that they had sent again for her physician; that she had received the last rites of the church; that, nevertheless, she was now better, and that she had just risen. When I entered her chamber, I found her seated on a sofa between her father and sister, and the physician was administering a medicine. The moment I appeared, Madame de Valmont came to me, and with an expression of satisfaction that embarrassed me, she said, 'She has had a dreadful crisis, but she is now better, she is surprisingly better.' At these words, I turned to the physician, as if to ask his opinion, and he gave me a look that made me tremble. My heart beat in such a manner, that I was forced to sit down. At this instant, M. de Valmont was expressing his opinion: 'Certainly,' said

said he, 'as she has had the strength to go through the crisis of this night, we have every reason to think her quite out of danger.'—'Indeed,' added Madame de Valmont, 'we must look through a very gloomy medium to think otherwise.'—'Ah! my dear sister,' interrupted Cecilia, 'how little reason'—M. d'Aimeri, who till this moment had kept a deep silence, now looked on Cecilia, with eyes suffused with tears, and seizing one of her hands: 'Why, why,' said he, with a voice scarcely articulate, 'would you deprive us of every hope?'—All the answer Cecilia could make, was to throw her arms around her father's neck, and to press him for some moments, in the most expressive and affecting silence. Then turning to Madame de Valmont, she enquired after young Charles, and desired to see him. He was sent for, and when he came, Cecilia made him sit down at the foot of the sofa, and observing his eyes to be red, she said, with a sigh: 'Charles, and you have too been weeping?'—Charles, at these words, kissed her hand, and reclined his head on his aunt's lap, not daring to shew his face, as he still continued weeping. Cecilia, perceiving her hand wet with his tears, 'Charles,' added she, 'if you were not quite so young, you would be sensible, that after a well spent life, the moment in which you now see me must be the sweetest, the happiest of all! While my body is weak and languid, my soul is quite peaceful and serene: My sensations, my ideas now are unspeakably delightful! My dear Charles, I am sure that you will be the pride, the happiness of my father, and that you will ever love him as tenderly as I do.'—As she finished these words, Charles, all in tears, rose hastily, and ran to throw himself into his grandfather's arms. This was done in a moment, and with such a grace, such an exquisite expression of sensibility! M. d'Aimeri pressed him to his bosom with the most passionate tenderness, and then taking him by the hand, led him out of his daughter's chamber, in order to retire, no doubt, into his own, and there to indulge without restraint in the melancholy sensations with which he was oppressed. A

moment after, Cecilia conjures us all to go down to dinner. You may imagine that we were not long at table. Madame de Valmont still persevered in cherishing illusive hopes. For my part, I had none; for the physician had positively told me, that Cecilia had not twenty-four hours to live. When we had dined, we returned to her apartment. We found her very composed; and the Curate who had not left her, said that she appeared much better than she had been the evening before. We seated ourselves round the sofa, and presently Cecilia expressed an inclination to try whether she could not walk. Her father and the physician helped to raise her from her seat, and supported her by her arms; but scarce had she moved five or six steps, when stopping suddenly, she cried out, 'Oh! my father!'—At this plaintive and heart-piercing cry, M. d'Aimeri, almost distracted, took her in his arms, while she gently reclined on him, with her eyes half-closed. The physician seized her hand, and feeling her pulse, made a sign to the priest, who instantly took a crucifix, and approaching Cecilia, with a loud voice, pronounced these awful words, 'Recommend your soul to God!'—At these words, Cecilia opened her eyes, and raising them towards Heaven, pressed the crucifix to her bosom. In this attitude, her countenance, her whole person appeared with an expression and majesty, that gave her beauty a kind of celestial charm. After an ejaculation, she suddenly fell upon her knees: 'Oh! my father,' said she, 'give me your last blessing!'—M. d'Aimeri throws himself by her side, his trembling arms opening, to receive once more this beloved child. Cecilia sinks on the bosom of her unhappy father—all is now over—the dear saint expires.

After this melancholy relation, you will not expect any other particulars. It may be sufficient to observe, that M. d'Aimeri is inconsolable for the death of his blessed daughter. His grief can be felt, can be imagined only by the parental heart. I obliged him to come that very evening with me to B***, with Madame de Valmont and young Charles; and when he is more in a situation

situation to listen to our friendly advice, we will persuade him to travel with his grandson. This may prove that salutary diversion of his grief, which, with the balmy aid of time, is all the remedy that can cure his wounded mind.—Adieu, my dear friend; write to me immediately. You know that I am not lightly affected by such scenes. You know to what an excess my friends are dear to me, when I see them suffering and unhappy. Imagine then how deeply I am distressed, and how consolatory, how necessary will be your Letters!

LETTER VI.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

I AM going, my dear Baron, to give you the particulars of an event, which I think so very extraordinary, that I cannot postpone it a single moment; especially as M. d'Aimeri makes a principal figure in my history. Your friendship for him would alone have been sufficient to inspire the warmest attention to his concerns; but, exclusive of this, his great merits, and severe misfortunes, have united to claim the most tender sympathy, and my lasting friendship. I can imagine how great your curiosity must be; and I now proceed to gratify it.—I heard with great satisfaction, that M. d'Aimeri had set out on his travels, with his son Charles, and that I might shortly expect to see him here. He arrived about eight or ten days ago; and after the affecting history you had given me of his misfortune, I could not but engage apartments for him, at the house of one of my most intimate friends. I paid my respects to him the same evening. A slight indisposition confined him for a few days to his chamber; but he was soon so well recovered as to walk out and to visit whatever was curious in the city. In the course of these visits, he heard much of

the villa of M. d'Anglures, that singular and benevolent character whom I have already mentioned. His curiosity, in course, was greatly excited; and, as I am very intimate with this gentleman, I readily promised to introduce him. I set out the next day, after dinner, with M. d'Aimeri and Charles in the same carriage. When we arrived at this delightful spot, we were told that M. d'Anglures was gone to take a walk into the fields, but that he would return soon. In the mean time, we were admitted into his apartments. About half an hour after perceiving that M. d'Aimeri was too deeply engaged in the cabinet of Natural History, to be easily diverted from it, I offered to conduct young Charles into the gardens, which were the admiration of every one. We had scarce left the house, when a servant came to inform us, that M. d'Anglures was returned, and would attend us instantly. He soon appeared. The moment he cast his eyes upon Charles, I observed a sudden alteration in his countenance. He seemed to behold him with an air, in which astonishment and tenderness were equally blended; and, after some pause, he exclaimed, 'Great God! what a likeness!'—Then turning away his head, he wiped his eyes, that were all suffused with tears. Afterwards, taking Charles by the hand, 'Forgive,' said he, 'my curiosity, but—how old are you?'—'Fifteen and a half,' answered Charles.—'Oh! Heavens!' resumed M. d'Anglures, 'her very voice! Ah! Sir,' he continued, addressing himself to me, 'Who is this young gentleman? What is his name?'—'The Chevalier de Valmont'—I had no sooner pronounced these words, than M. d'Anglures caught Charles in his arms, and pressed him to his bosom, with a transport, which would have enabled me to divine the cause, if I had known any thing of the history of this extraordinary man; but being absolutely unacquainted with it, I contemplated this unexpected scene with inexpressible surprise, when M. d'Anglures, again turning to me, said, 'This very day, you shall know the cause of the situation in which you now behold me; you shall be acquainted
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ed with my whole history; and I am certain you will pity me.—But with whom does this amiable boy travel? Is it with his Governor?—‘No,’ I answered, ‘with his grandfather.’—‘His grandfather!’ returned M. d’Anglures, with a frantic air.—‘Yes, M. d’Aimeri’—‘What!’ interrupted he, M. d’Aimeri here! M. d’Aimeri in this house!’—He uttered these words with such a vehement, yet faltering voice, and the fury of anger was so visible in his eyes, that were still bedewed with tears, that I could be at no loss to understand, that if he had found in Charles a dear and affecting object, he had recollected in his grandfather a detested enemy.—‘I hope,’ said I, ‘that you understand the rights of hospitality, and that your conduct will not lessen the exalted opinion I entertain of your wisdom and virtue.’—‘Ah!’ cried he, ‘if you knew’—He then seemed in a revery for some moments, when fixing his eyes on Charles, his rage, so far from subsiding, appeared to kindle afresh. Charles, who till then was motionless with astonishment, now broke silence: ‘Sir,’ said he, ‘do you know my grandfather, and can you have any cause of complaint against him? If you have, I am ready, in his name, to give you all the satisfaction you require—’ Generous boy!’ interrupted M. d’Anglures, embracing him.—‘I repeat it,’ said Charles, ‘do you know my grandfather?’—M. d’Anglures hesitated a moment, and then assuming a milder and more tranquil air, he answered, ‘Your grandfather does not know me, as you will soon perceive; but by a strange fatality, his name recalls the most painful events to my recollection. I desire to see him instantly. Wait for us in the garden.’—‘No, no,’ interrupted Charles, with great impetuosity, ‘you shall not see him but in my presence.’—‘Young gentleman,’ returned M. d’Anglures, ‘I forgive this unbecoming mistrust, on account of the respectable cause that excites it. But know, I consent that Count de Roseville shall attend as a witness to our interview. Recollect too that I am in my own house, and that were it true that your grandfather

is my enemy, he should here find an inviolable asylum.' M. d'Anglures,' said I, 'is perfectly right; and I think that M. d'Aimeri himself would be much displeased at the expressions that have escaped you. Stay here then, and in a quarter of an hour we will return.'—After this reproof we left Charles, who, however, was not exempt from great anxiety. For my part, surprised and confounded by all that I had just heard, I waited with some apprehension, and with extreme curiosity, for the unravelling of this extraordinary adventure. I had not the courage to question M. d'Anglures, who, on entering the house, said, 'Go, my dear Count, and look for M. d'Aimeri; but give me your honour that you will not mention what has passed.'—I promised obedience to this injunction.—'Well then,' he resumed, 'wait till I send for you.'—He left me, without giving me the opportunity of answering him. I found M. d'Aimeri still in the gallery of Natural History, and so deeply engaged, that he did not perceive I was returned without his grandson. In about ten minutes, a servant came to inform us, that M. d'Anglures waited for us in his apartment. This invitation excited an uneasiness, which M. d'Aimeri, however, was still too absent to remark. I took his arm, and we followed the servant, who, having led us through many apartments, shewed us a door, gave us the key of it, and retired. I immediately opened this mysterious door, and entered first. I thought that I had known the whole house, which I had been over a hundred times; but I saw with astonishment, that this apartment, equally singular and magnificent, was absolutely unknown to me. The walls and floor were of a white and dazzling marble; and at the end, opposite the door, four grand pillars of porphyry supported an elegant canopy of silver tissue, ornamented with silver fringe, and curtains of gauze. These, being quite drawn, concealed the inside of the pavilion; but the moment M. d'Aimeri appeared, they were drawn up, and we discovered M. d'Anglures, who, in a dread-
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ful voice, thus addressed him, 'Lift up thy eyes, barbarian, and contemplate thy work.'—

M. d'Aimeri, trembling, turned towards the affecting object, that was now to tear open afresh all the wounds of his heart. On a pedestal, he saw a statue of white marble, representing Fidelity weeping. This figure held in one hand some long and beautiful tresses of light hair, and with the other she pressed to her heart a letter half-folded, of which not a word could be seen but the name, in large letters of gold, CECILIA. At this sight, your unhappy friend, petrified with astonishment and grief, is for a moment motionless. Then looking with a distracted eye at M. d'Anglures, trembling, tottering, and leaning against a pillar, 'What!' said he, 'the Chevalier de Murville!'—'Yes, himself,' interrupted M. d'Anglures; 'yes, I am that unfortunate—the Chevalier de Murville, thy implacable enemy'—'Oh! my daughter!' exclaimed M. d'Aimeri: he could say no more: his sobs deprived him of utterance.—'Inhuman man,' resumed M. d'Anglures, 'of what felicity has thy execrable ambition robbed me! It is just that at length that very ambition should now contribute to augment thy confusion and remorse. Know what fortune I possess. Behold these riches which I despise, and of which I could never know the value but in sharing them with the object I adored, that innocent victim of thy cruelty, as susceptible, alas! as she was unfortunate: for if thou art still ignorant of it, learn now that I was loved!—Yes! barbarian, Cecilia loved me; and, notwithstanding thy atrocious cruelty, it is she who ordered me to respect thy life—it is she only who could withhold this desperate arm.—I abandoned my country; I retired to this spot, to seek in vain for that repose which thou hast torn from me for ever. A faithful friend, the only one I have left in France, gives me every year some intelligence of Cecilia. I know that she is still living—be grateful to Heaven—so long as she is in being, thou hast nothing to dread from my resentment; but'—'Ah! then' interrupted M. d'Aimeri, 'follow the suggestions of your rage—your
B 5 friend

friend deceives you—Cecilia is no more.’—‘She is no more!’ cried the Chevalier de Murville, ‘Cecilia no more—and art thou still alive?’—Thunder-struck, frantic, he was now rushing furiously towards M. d’Aimeri. I threw myself between them. At this instant, young Charles, impelled by his apprehensions for his grandfather’s safety, hastily entered the room, and seeing that I was holding the Chevalier de Murville, ‘What!’ said he, addressing himself to him, ‘do you deceive me? What means this furious passion? If my grandfather is the object of it, here am I, who insist upon satisfaction.’—These words restored the Chevalier de Murville to himself. The countenance of Charles, and the sound of his voice, operated upon him like an irresistible charm. To this transport of fury succeeded the most tender emotions; his eyes were bedewed with tears; and turning to M. d’Aimeri, ‘Ah!’ cried he, ‘give me this youth, and I can pardon all the pangs with which you have embittered my life.’—M. d’Aimeri, so far from being capable of answering this address, did not even hear it. Plunged in the deepest revery; his eyes fixed on his unhappy daughter’s hair; he was intent alone on this distressing object. I approached him, and taking him by the arm, ‘Come,’ said I, ‘let us leave the Chevalier de Murville to his own reflections: he will doubtless soon reproach himself for having thus aggravated sufferings a thousand times more poignant than his own. ‘Yes, Sir,’ I continued, going up to the Chevalier de Murville, ‘I was ignorant of your name and of your passion for the unfortunate Cecilia; but I knew that she expired in her father’s arms, and that this wretched father, inconsolable for her loss, and overwhelmed with sorrow, could never have supported life, but for the sake of this young man—Cecilia’s nephew, and the only son that Heaven has left him.’—‘What!’ returned the Chevalier, ‘is his son dead? Does he lament Cecilia? Ah! if he is wretched, I alone am now guilty.’—‘Cease,’ cried M. d’Aimeri, to reproach yourself for a transport of rage, which is but
a con-

a consequence of the vengeance of Heaven that pursues me. If it be true, that a strong resentment can last for ever in a generous heart, you ought never to forgive me, and I—I am bound to pardon every thing in you.—M. d'Aimeri, supported between me and Charles, now left the house, and with what painful sensations you may easily imagine. I conveyed him back to *****, in a situation that truly claimed compassion. I spent the evening with him, and in the presence of the Chevalier de Valmont he related his whole history, which he concluded with this exhortation to his grandson: 'You will one day be a father: be careful not to make any one of your children an object of partiality. Suggestions of preference will render you blind to the vices and imperfections of the favourite child, and unjust and cruel to all the others.'

The next morning, I returned alone to the Chevalier de Murville. I found him under the greatest dejection of mind, severely reproaching himself for his behaviour the preceding day. I made him more wretched still, by informing him of all the particulars which M. d'Aimeri had been relating to me. He burst into tears while I was describing the affecting scene in the cottage, where Cecilia received the impression that was so fatal to her; and you may imagine his emotions, while I was relating to him all the particulars of her last sickness and death. After answering all his enquiries, I put some questions to him in my turn. He told me that he had voluntarily exiled himself, that Cecilia might never more hear of him, and that he might never be in the way of meeting her father; that he had kept up a correspondence in France with one person only, whom he had enjoined never to mention the name of M. d'Aimeri, that time and reason, although they had allayed the first turbulent emotions of despair, had never been able to eradicate his passion from a heart, in which Cecilia would live for ever; in fine, that his desire of appearing worthy of the favour and confidence of a great Prince, had excited some sentiments of ambition; but that he had found no real consolation but

in retirement, study, and pleasure of doing good. Before we parted, he wrote a letter to M. d'Aimeri, containing the most pathetic apologies; which he desired me to deliver. M. d'Aimeri could not receive it without great expressions of sensibility. That very evening, we were informed that the Chevalier de Murville was extremely ill, and had sent for a physician. He is much better to-day. When he is perfectly recovered, and in a situation to receive us, I will accompany my young Prince to the house and gardens, which he has not yet seen; and M. d'Aimeri has requested me to take that opportunity of gratifying the curiosity of the Chevalier de Valmont. I hope, therefore, that no animosity will now subsist between these two worthy men.

THE

T H E
BLIND WOMAN OF SPA.
A C O M E D Y.

All the particulars of this Comedy are strictly true. Even the name of the woman, the names of her children, and the profession of her husband, are preserved.

Le Conquerant est craint, le Sage est estimé ;
Mais le Bienfaisant charme, & lui seul est aimé. VOLTAIRE.

THE PERSONS.

Mrs. Aglebert, the wife of a Shoemaker.

Jennet, }
Mary, } *Mrs. Aglebert's daughters.*
Louisa, }

Goto, a blind woman.

Lady Seymour, an English Lady.

Felicia, a French Lady.

Father Anthony, a Capuchin Friar.

The Scene is at the Waters of Spa.

SCENE I. *A Walk.*

Mrs. Aglebert, Jennet.

Mrs. Aglebert, (holding a bundle.)

LET us stop a little, the weather is so fine.
Jennet. We are almost at home, mother; and if you will give me leave, I will carry the bundle, which encumbers you.

Mrs.

Mrs. Aglebert. No, no, it is too heavy. It is our provision for to-morrow and Sunday.

Jennet. There is nothing but potatoes!

Mrs. Aglebert. Well, Jennet?

Jennet. For these eighteen months we have had no other food but potatoes.

Mrs. Aglebert. My child, when people are poor—

Jennet. You was not so eighteen months ago, mother? We made such good bread, and pies, and cakes.—

Mrs. Aglebert. Ah, if you knew my reason!—But, Jennet, you are too young to comprehend these things.

Jennet. Too young! I am almost fifteen.

Mrs. Aglebert. Your heart is good; and I will tell you all one of these days.

Jennet. Ah, mother! tell me now.—

Mrs. Aglebert. Hush, I hear a noise; here are some ladies coming.—

Jennet. Ha, mother!

Mrs. Aglebert. What is the matter?—

Jennet. It is she: it is the lady that gave my sisters and I our new gowns.

Mrs. Aglebert. Did you not go and thank her this morning?

Jennet. Yes, mother.

Mrs. Aglebert. Now let us be gone! and the rather as our poor blind girl Goto has not had a walk to-day, and I dare say is in expectation of your coming. Come, you shall lead her to the capuchin garden, where I will join you when my work is done. Come then.—

Jennet. I will follow you, mother. (*Mrs. Aglebert goes before. Jennet slackens her pace. Lady Seymour and Felicia pass by her, without observing her. Jennet looks at Felicia, and says.*) She did not see me; I am sorry for it, because I greatly love her. (*She runs to overtake her mother.*)

SCENE

SCENE II.

Lady Seymour, Felicia.

LADY Seymour. There is no moving a step in this place without meeting some unhappy wretches!—It grieves me to the heart.—

Felicia. You have such sensibility!—Besides, I think in general the English women are more compassionate than we; they have less whim, less coquetry; and coquetry stifles and destroys every worthy sentiment.

Lady Seymour. What you said just now reminds me of an incident with which I was struck this morning. You know the Viscountess Roselle?

Felicia. A little.

Lady Seymour. I met her about two hours ago in the square; there was a poor old lame beggar asked her for charity, and told her his family were dying for want and hunger. The Viscountess hearkened to him with compassion, and pulling her purse out of her pocket was going to give it to him; when unfortunately a person with caps and feathers to sell, drew near. He opened the band-box, and the Viscountess no longer heard the complaint of the old man but with coldness and inattention. However, to get rid of him, she threw a trifle, and purchased the whole contents of the band-box.

Felicia. I am sure your ladyship relieved the old man.

Lady Seymour. Hear me to the end. The poor man picked up the money, exclaiming, *My wife and my children shall not die this day!* These few words kindled some emotions in the heart of the Viscountess, who is naturally good and humane: she called back the old man; and, after a moment's reflection, said to the person with whom she had been dealing, you may charge me more for these things I have just now taken, but you must give me credit. The proposal was accepted, and the purse given to the unhappy old man, whose joy and surprise had almost made him expire at the feet of his benefactress.

nefactress. Seated under a tree, and concealed by the covered walk, I could easily attend to this interesting scene, which has furnished me with abundant matter for reflection.

Felicia. You should take a journey to Paris; and since you are fond of making reflection, we will supply you with many other subjects. You will there see, for instance, that we value ourselves on imitating you in every thing, except one, I mean benevolence. We carry all your fashions to the extreme, we take to your customs and manners; but we have not yet adopted that generous custom universally established with you, to raise subscriptions for encouraging merit, or relieving the distressed.

Lady Seymour. So you mimic rather than imitate us, since you make no mention of what renders us truly valuable; and by overdoing our customs and manners, you turn us into ridicule.

Felicia. I hope in time you will communicate some of your virtues to us, as you have already given us your manners. But, my lady, to continue this conversation more at our ease, will you go to the mountain, where we shall find shade?—

Lady Seymour. I cannot, for I must wait the coming of a person whom I appointed to meet me here.

Felicia. Will your business delay you long?

Lady Seymour. No, I have but one word to say. Ha, here he comes!

Felicia. So, it is Father Anthony! I can guess the motive for such an appointment. You want to be informed where you can best do a generous action; and for such a purpose the venerable Father Anthony is worthy of your confidence. Farewel, my lady; I shall expect you on the mountain.

Lady Seymour. Where shall I find you?

Felicia. In the little temple.

Lady Seymour. I will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

[*Felicia goes out.*]

SCENE

S C E N E III.

Lady Seymour, Father Anthony.

LADY Seymour. Poor Father Anthony, with how much pain he walks ; what a pity he is so old, he has an excellent heart !—Good day to you, Father Anthony ; I have been waiting for you an hour.

Father Anthony. (*a nosegay in his hand.*) I did not care to leave home without a little nosegay for your ladyship, and I had not a rose ; but at last one of our brothers gave me a couple.—These carnations, however, are from my own garden.

Lady Seymour. They are very fine.

Father Anthony. O, as to carnations I fear nobody.—Without boasting, I have the finest carnations ! But, my lady, you have not been to see my garden since I have had carnations in blow !—

Lady Seymour. I will certainly go. But in your public garden there is always such a number of people, and I am so unsociable.—But, Father Anthony, let us talk of our affairs.—Have you found out a family for me that are very poor and very worthy ?—

Father Anthony. I have found one.—Ah ! my lady, I have found a treasure :—A woman, her husband, five children, and in such want !—

Lady Seymour. What employment is the husband ?

Father Anthony. He is a shoemaker, and his wife makes linen ; but she is a woman of such piety and virtue. She is the daughter of a schoolmaster ; she reads and writes ; she has an education above her station in life. Then if you know the charity of which these people are capable, and the good they have done. Ah, my lady, they richly deserve your fifty guineas.

Lady Seymour. You give me great pleasure, Father—
—Well?—

Father Anthony. O, it is a long history. In the first place, the husband's name is Aglebert.—But will you

you go to his house?—you must witness it to believe all.—

Lady Seymour. Hear me, Father; come back to this place in two hours, and we will go together to these good people; but in the mean time tell me their history in two words.

Father Anthony. In two words!—It would take me three quarters of an hour for the bare preamble; and, what is more, I never could tell any thing in two words.

Lady Seymour. So I find. Well, Father, farewell till the evening; I hear people coming towards us, and we shall be interrupted.

Father Anthony. And for my part I have some little business; but I will be here with you by seven.

Lady Seymour. You will find me here. Farewel, Father Anthony.

Father Anthony, (who makes some steps, and returns.) My lady, you will come and see my carnations, won't you?

Lady Seymour. Yes, Father Anthony, I promise you, you may depend upon it.

Father Anthony. O they are the worthiest of people!

Lady Seymour. Who, your carnations?

Father Anthony. No, I was speaking of the worthy Agleberts. It is a family of God.—*(He moves some steps, turns back, and speaks with an air of confidence)* Then I have one variegated red and white; 'tis a none such in Spa.

Lady Seymour. I will certainly go and see it to-morrow.

Father Anthony, (in going out.) Farewel, my lady; what a worthy action you are going to do this evening!

[He goes out.]

Lady Seymour. The Agleberts and the carnations make extraordinary confusion to his brain. To relieve the poor, and cultivate his flowers, make the sum of his pleasures and his happiness. The greatest virtues are always accompanied with the most simple desires. But I must go and find Felicia.—Ha, what a sweet pretty girl!—

SCENE

SCENE IV.

Lady Seymour, Jennet, Goto, Mary.

Jennet, leading Goto to the bottom of the stage, where she stops and sits down. Mary, her sister, comes forward to look at Lady Seymour.

MARY. No, it is not she.

Lady Seymour, (looking at her.) She is charming.

—Come hither, my little dear; what are you looking for?

Mary, (making a courtesey.) It is that I took you for a very good lady, and who is likewise very amiable; and I find I am mistaken.

Lady Seymour. But perhaps I am good too, as well as your lady.

Mary. (shaking her head.) Oh!

Lady Seymour. You do not believe it?

Mary. The lady gave me a gown.

Lady Seymour. O, that is another affair.—Is that it you have now?

Mary. Yes, madam; and then I have a fine cap, which I shall wear on Sunday. And my sister Jennet and my sister Louisa, have new gowns.

Lady Seymour. And all from the good lady?

Mary. Yes, indeed.

Lady Seymour. What is her name?

Mary. I never saw her till this morning, and I have forgot her name; but she is a French lady, and lodges at the Prince Eugene.

Lady Seymour. O 'tis Felicia.—And are your sisters as pretty as you?

Mary. There is Jennet below.

Lady Seymour. That young girl who sits knitting?

Mary. Yes, that is she.

Lady Seymour. Who is that with her?

Mary. It is Goto, our blind woman.

Lady Seymour. Who is your blind woman?

Mary. Mary, our blind woman, as my mother calls her,

her, whom we walk with, and lead about. As to me I have only led her these three months, because I was too little; and still I am not allowed to lead her in the streets for fear of the crowd.—

Lady Seymour. She is surely one of your relations.

Mary. Yes, a relation very possibly. I don't know; but my mother loves her as much as she loves us, for she sometimes calls her her sixth child.

Lady Seymour. It is very right to take care of relations, especially when they are infirm.—What is your name?

Mary. Mary, at your service.

Lady Seymour. Well, Mary, come and see me to-morrow morning, I live upon the terrace at the large white house, and bring your blind woman with you; I shall be very glad to be acquainted with her.

Mary. O Goto, is a very good girl.

Lady Seymour. Farewel, Mary, till to-morrow.

[*She goes out.*]

S C E N E V.

Mary, Jennet, Goto.

MARY. Here is another good lady.—I'll lay a wager she will have a Gown made for Goto; she loves blind people, I see that.—I am very glad of it. I shall keep my pretty apron; but if it had not been for this, I would have given it to Goto.—Ah! there they come.—They want to know what the lady said to me.

Jennet. Mary, tell us who that fine lady is that was talking with you?

Mary. Is she not a pretty lady? She lives upon the terrace; I shall go there to-morrow, and lead Goto with me.

Jennet. Not alone, there are too many streets.

Mary. Yes, to be sure, and in the streets too. The fine lady said I was tall enough to do that. She knows these things very well, perhaps.

Goto. Mary, you are not strong enough to support me.

Mary.

Mary. O, to be sure.—But it is because you love Jennet better than me.—That is not fair.

Goto. Alas! my children, I love you equally; you are all so charitable!

Jennet. Well, Mary, I will only lead Goto through the streets without entering the lady's house.—

Mary. No, no, you shall come with us: don't be uneasy; but, going along the road, Goto shall likewise lean upon me. Let her promise me that, and I shall be satisfied.

Goto. Yes, Mary; yes, my girl.—Poor dears, God will bless you all.

Mary. By the bye, Goto, are you our relation? The lady asked me, and I did not know what answer to make.

Goto. Alas! I am nothing to you, and I owe you every thing—But Heaven will reward you.

Mary. What is it then you owe us, Goto?—Is it that it is a trouble to us to take care of you!—It is with such good-will. O! I wish I was but big enough to dress, serve, and lead you, like my mother and Jennet.—

Jennet (*low to Mary.*) Hold your tongue, you vex her; I believe she is crying.—

Mary. (*going to the other side of Goto, taking her by the hand.*) Goto, my dear Goto, have I said any thing that gives you pain? Are you offended?

Goto. On the contrary, my dear children, your good hearts make me forget all sorrows.—

Mary. O! we are very happy then.—But I hear my mother's voice; it is she and Louisa.

SCENE VI.

Mary, Jennet, Goto, Mrs. Aglebert, Louisa.

MRS. Aglebert. There they are.—Jennet, we were looking for you; come, it is to go home.

Jennet. O, mother, allow us to work here half an hour longer.

Mrs.

Mrs. Aglebert. Very well, I have no objection. Mary, go and fetch my wheel, and bring some work for yourself at the same time. [*Mary goes out.*]

Louisa. And for me, mother?

Mrs. Aglebert. You shall stay with Goto, in case she wants any thing; you shall execute her commissions. You must accustom yourself to be of use as well as your sisters. Come, let us sit down.—(*She draws a form, and sits down; she takes Goto by the hand, and places her between herself and Jennet.*)

Louisa, (to Jennet.) Sister, give me your place, I must be there to serve Goto.

Mrs. Aglebert. Sit down on the ground by her.

Louisa. With all my heart.—(*She places herself upon her knees at Goto's feet.*)

Jennet. Mother, there is your wheel. *Mary* gives her mother the wheel, who begins immediately to spin: *Jennet* knits; *Mary* sits upon a large stone in the corner near the form, by the side of her mother, and hems a handkerchief; and *Louisa* takes some violets out of the pocket of her apron to make a nosegay.)

Mrs. Aglebert, (after a short silence.) Mary, is your father come home?

Mary. No, mother.

Jennet. Is he not gone to the Capuchin convent?

Mrs. Aglebert. Yes, to speak with Father Anthony.

Mary. O, Father Anthony has fine carnations.

Louisa, (crying.) Ah, Goto, you have thrown down all my violets, by your turning, on the ground.

Goto. Forgive me, my dear child.—I could not see them.

Louisa. (still crying.) O, my violets!—

Mrs. Aglebert. What is the matter, little girl?

Louisa. Marry, she has thrown down all my violets. So she may gather them up, and that too—(*She throws away the nosegay she had begun, in a passion.*)

Jennet. O, fie, *Louisa.*

Mrs. Aglebert. *Louisa*, come hither.—(*Louisa rises, and Mrs. Aglebert takes her between her knees.*) *Louisa*, are you angry with Goto?

Louisa.

Louisa. Yes, she has thrown down my violets.

Mrs. Aglebert. We shall talk of that by and bye; but in the first place, take my wheel and carry it home.

Louisa. With all my heart, mother.—O it is too heavy, I cannot even lift it.

Mrs. Aglebert. Well, Louisa, I will no longer love you, since you cannot carry my wheel.

Louisa. (*crying.*) But, mother, I have not strength; is it my fault?

Mrs. Aglebert. So you think I am wrong to desire it?

Louisa. Yes, mother, you are wrong. And then you know very well that I am too little to carry that great ugly wheel.

Mrs. Aglebert. It is very true, I know it; but don't you know likewise that Goto is blind? Can she see your flowers, and can she help you to gather them up?

Louisa. Well, I was wrong to cry and to be provoked with her.

Mrs. Aglebert. Is she not sufficiently unhappy, poor girl, not to see? to be blind from her birth?

Goto, (*taking Mrs. Aglebert by the hand.*) Ah! Mrs. Aglebert, I am not unhappy; no, your goodness, your charity—

Mrs. Aglebert. Don't speak of that, my dear girl—Hear me, Louisa, if you do not look upon Goto as your sister, I will no longer look upon you as my child.

Louisa. I love Goto very well; but, however, she is not my sister.

Mrs. Aglebert. It pleased God to make this poor girl fall quite helpless into my hands; was it not to say to me, There is a sixth child which I give you?

Jennet. O yes, just the same thing.

Mary. I likewise can conceive that.

Mrs. Aglebert. And Louisa too will be able to conceive it in time: goodness of heart must come with reason. My dear children, there is no such thing as content without a good heart; I repeat it to you, and desire you will remember it. Your father and I have worked hard, and have had a great deal of trouble; but by always

ways doing our duty, life passes smoothly; and then one good action consoles us for ten years of toil and vexation.

Mary. Mother I think I hear some ladies coming.

Mrs. Aglebert. Very well, let us be gone.

Jennet. Mother, mother, it is the French lady.

Mrs. Aglebert. No matter, let us go home. Come, put back the bench. [*They all rise.*]

S C E N E VII.

Mary, Jennet, Goto, Louisa, Mrs. Aglebert, Lady Seymour, Felicia.

LADY Seymour. Father Anthony is not yet come. —Ha! there are the young girls of whom we were just now speaking.

Felicia, (to Jennet.) Is that your mother?

Mrs. Aglebert, (making a courtsey.) yes, madam—— and I promised to go to-morrow to thank you, madam, for your goodness to my children; but I have been so busy yesterday and to-day.

Felicia. This blind girl is one of your family, no doubt?

Mrs. Aglebert. No, madam.

Goto. No, but it is the same thing.

Mrs. Aglebert. Jennet, take my wheel.——Let us go, lest we disturb the ladies.——

Lady Seymour. I beg you will not go away. I have something to say to you. (*Low to Felicia.*) She seems to dread our questions about the blind woman. It is somewhat singular.

Felicia, (low to Lady Seymour.) I made the same remark.—(*Aloud to Mrs. Aglebert.*) What is your situation in life, your business?

Mrs. Aglebert. I spin and make linen.

Lady Seymour. And is your work sufficient to support your family?

Mrs. Aglebert. Yes, madam, we have wherewithal to live.

Felicia. That day, however, when I met your daughters

ters on Annette and Lubin's hill, I was equally struck with the poverty which was evident from their dress, and with their charming figures.—And you yourself don't seem to be in a more prosperous state.

Mrs. Aglebert. It is true we are not rich, but we are content.

Lady Seymour, (to Felicia.) Does not she interest you?

Felicia. Beyond expression.—(*To Mrs. Aglebert.*) You have three charming little girls there—(*All the three courtsey.*) Have you any more children?

Mrs. Aglebert. I have two boys likewise, thank God.

Goto. And I, whom she entirely supports.—

Mrs. Aglebert. Ah, Goto!—

Lady Seymour. How!—

Goto. It is to these worthy people I owe every thing. This family of angels lodge, feed, clothe, and serve me who am a poor infirm girl, frequently sick, and always useless. I find in them a father, mother, brothers, sisters, and servants; for they are all equally disposed to do good offices, all equally good, equally charitable. Ah, ladies, they are angels, real angels, whom you see before you.

Felicia. What, it is impossible!—O heavens!

Lady Seymour. Surprise and compassion have struck me motionless.

Mrs. Aglebert. My God! what we have done was so natural!—This good girl had no other resource; we could comfort and help her: could it be possible to abandon her?—

Mary, (low to Jennet.) Why are these ladies so very uneasy at this? See, they are in tears.

Jennet. It is because they are surprised at it; but, however, there is no reason.

Felicia. Be so good as to let us know the particulars of such an affecting story.

Lady Seymour, (to Mrs. Aglebert.) How did this poor girl fall into your hands?

Goto. We lodged in the same house, when an old aunt of mine, who took care of me, and upon whose la-

hour I subsisted, happened to die, and with her I lost every means of support. I fell sick, and this dear good woman came to see me; she began by sitting up with me, paying a doctor for me, making my drinks, in short, serving me as my nurse. When I recovered, she took me home to her house, where I have been treated these two years as if I had been the eldest daughter of the family.

Felicia, (embracing Mrs. Aglebert.) O incomparable woman! with such a soul, into what a condition has your destiny placed you.

Lady Seymour. Let me too embrace her.

Mrs. Aglebert. Ladies, you make me ashamed.

Lady Seymour, (to Mrs. Aglebert.) Tell us your name, that reputable name, which shall never be effaced from our remembrance.

Mrs. Aglebert. My name is Catherine Aglebert.

Lady Seymour. Aglebert!—It is she whom Father Anthony mentioned to me.—Do you know Father Anthony?

Mrs. Aglebert. Yes, madam, he came to our house this morning, and this evening has sent for my husband; but I don't know what he wants with him.

Goto. I saw him yesterday at the Capuchin Gardens; he asked me some questions, and I told him my whole story.

Felicia. But how comes it that your story is not known to all the people in Spa? How is it possible that such an instance of virtue and benevolence should remain unknown?

Goto. Because Mr. and Mrs. Aglebert have never mentioned it: besides, I am frequently sick, and of course confined to the house a part of the year; and Jennet, who takes care of me, leads me, by her mother's desire, to the walks which are the least frequented; and when she observes people coming, she leads me a different way. It is only when she is greatly hurried with her work that I am taken to the garden of the Capuchins, which

which is near at hand, and that has only happened three or four times.

Lady Seymour, (to Felicia.) Here is virtue in all its lustre, and we enjoy the inexpressible happiness of discovering and contemplating it in all its purity. Simple, sublime, natural; without vanity, without ostentation, and finding within itself both its glory and its reward.

Felicia. Ah! who can see it in this light without paying their adoration? Who can look upon this woman without feeling a delightful emotion of respect and admiration!

Lady Seymour. And that conformity of disposition, that general agreement for the good of the whole family!—And that girl, the affecting and virtuous object of so many kindnesses, how she expresses her gratitude, how she is penetrated with whatever she ought to feel!—No, nothing is wanting to complete the delightful picture.

Mary. O mother, I think I see Father Anthony.

Louisa. I am glad of it, for he always gives me a violet.

Lady Seymour. Stay, Mrs. Aglebert, and we will go home with you presently.

Mrs. Aglebert. Madam!—

SCENE VIII.

Mary, Jennet, Goto, Louisa, Mrs. Aglebert, Lady Seymour, Felicia, Father Anthony.

LADY Seymour. Come, Father Anthony, come, I fancy I have discovered the treasure you spoke of to me.—

Father Anthony. Just so, there they are; it is Mrs. Aglebert. Well then, my lady, you know her history?—

Lady Seymour. I know all.

Father Anthony, (to Mrs. Aglebert.) Mrs. Aglebert, learn to know and thank your benefactress. Lady Seymour wanted to give fifty guineas to the most worthy family in Spa, and her choice has fallen upon your's.

Goto, (raising her hands to Heaven.) O my God!—

Mrs. Aglebert. Fifty guineas!——No, madam, it is too much; there are a number of worthy people in Spa still more needy than we. My neighbour Mrs. Savard is a worthy woman, and in such misery!——

Lady Seymour. Very well, I will take care of Mrs. Savard, I promise you.—Father Anthony shall give you fifty guineas this night, and I will add a hundred more as a portion for Jennet.

Mrs. Aglebert. O my lady, it is too much——it is indeed too much.——

Goto. O God! is it possible.——O where is this good lady, that I may embrace her knees—Jennet, where is she?—

(Jennet leads her to Lady Seymour's feet.)

Felicia. Poor girl, How affecting to see her—And you, my lady, you must be happy?

Goto, (laying hold of Lady Seymour's robe.) Is this she?——

Lady Seymour, (reaching her hand to Goto.) Yes, my girl!——

Goto, (throwing herself at her feet.) Ah, madam, I will pray for you all the days of my life. You have made the fortune of this respectable family, but you have done still more for me. I owe to you their content, and the only happiness poor Goto can find upon earth, which is the knowledge of these worthy people being made as happy as they deserve, I have nothing more to wish, and now I can die satisfied.

Lady Seymour, (raising her up and embracing her.) O, I conceive your happiness, and enjoy it with transport.

Mrs.

Mrs. Aglebert. We shall all join, madam, in our prayers to Heaven for you while we live.

Jennet. O yes indeed.

Mary. And with all our hearts.

Louisa. And I too.

Lady Seymour. Pray then that it may preserve to me a feeling heart; you prove to me that it is the most precious gift Heaven can bestow.

Father Anthony. My lady, I just now came past Vauxhall, where they are playing and dancing; but I will wager, the pleasures of the people who are there, are not equal to those you have been just now tasting.

Felicia. How they are to be pitied, if the happiness we have been enjoying is unknown to them!—

Lady Seymour. Come, let us go home with Mrs. Aglebert; I am impatient to see her husband!—

Mrs. Aglebert. Madam, you are very good, but we live so high!—

Lady Seymour. Come and conduct us; with what pleasure shall I enter that house which contains such virtuous inhabitants!

Mrs. Aglebert. Heavens! Father Anthony, speak for us: I am so surprised, so affected, I do not know how to express myself.—

Father Anthony. Come, come, my lady's heart can see into your's—But, Mrs. Aglebert, there is one favour you must obtain for me with my lady; it is to come and see my garden when she leaves you.

Lady Seymour. That is but just, and I promise you I will.

Father Anthony. My lady, you very well deserve the finest carnation in the whole town, and—you shall have it this night.

Mrs. Aglebert. If I durst offer my arm to the ladies.

Lady Seymour. With all my heart, my dear Mrs. Aglebert.

Mrs. Aglebert. Jennet and Mary, take care of Goto.

Felicia. Come, let us lose no time, let us go to see the man who is worthy of such a wife and such children.

(They go out with Father Anthony: Goto and the three little girls let them go on before.)

Goto. May God bestow his richest blessings on that good lady!

Mary. How amiable she is!

Louisa. How beautiful she is!

Jennet. Is it possible to be so good and not be beautiful?—Now they are past—come let us follow them—O my father, how happy shall I be to witness his joy!

THE
B R A Z I E R;
OR,
RECIPROCAL GRATITUDE.
FROM
THE TALES OF THE CASTLE.

Translated by Tho. Holcroft and Published by Robinson, London.

THE unfortunate James II. of England, was obliged to abandon his kingdom, and take refuge in France; where at the palace of St. Germain, Louis XIV. afforded him an asylum. A few loyal subjects followed him in his retreat, and settled at St. Germain; among whom was Madame de Varonne, descended from one of the best families in Ireland, and whose history I am going to recount.

During the life of her husband this lady lived in ease and affluence; but, after his death, being left in a foreign country without protection, she had not sufficient interest at court to obtain any part of the pension on which they had before subsisted. She neglected not, however, to present petitions to the ministers, who always answered, they would lay them before the king; and she continued in suspense for more than two years; till at last, on a renewal of her request, she received a denial, in so formal and positive a style, that she could no longer be blind to the fate that attended her.

Her situation was dreadful; ever since the death of M. de Varonne she had subsisted by selling her plate, and part of her furniture, till she had no longer any resource. Her love of solitude, her piety, and ill health, had al-

ways prevented her mixing much with the world; and still less than ever since the death of her husband. She found herself then without support, without friends, without hope; stripped of every thing, plunged into a state of frightful misery; and, that the measure of her woes might be full, she was fifty years of age, and her constitution was feeble and infirm.

In this her day of distress, she had recourse to him who best could grant her consolation and relief; who soonest could change the severity of her destiny: who most certainly could give her fortitude to support calamity: she cast herself at the feet of the Almighty, and arose with confidence, fortified and exalted above herself, and with the full assurance of a calm resignation reviving in her soul. She looked with a steady eye on the deplorable scene before her, and said to herself, Since it is the inevitable lot of mortals to die, of what importance is it whether we die by famine or disease; whether we sink to rest under a golden canopy or upon a bed of straw? Will death be less welcome, because I have nothing to regret? Oh no! I shall need neither exhortations nor fortitude; I have no sacrifices to make; abandoned by the world, I shall think only of him who rules the world; shall behold him ready to receive, to recompence me, and shall accept death as the most precious of all his gifts.

While she was in the midst of these reflections, Ambrose, her footman, entered the chamber. It is necessary you should know something of Ambrose, I will therefore give you a few traits of his character.

Ambrose was forty years of age, and had lived with Madame de Varonne twenty. He could neither read nor write, was naturally blunt, apt to find fault, spoke little, and always appeared to look with contempt on his equals, and with a degree of haughtiness on his masters. His sullen deportment and dissatisfied air, made his attendance not very agreeable; but his punctuality, good conduct, and perfect fidelity, had always made him esteemed as a most excellent and valuable servant. His
good

good qualities, however, were only known in part; for he possessed the most sublime virtue: under a rough exterior was concealed an elevated and generous soul.

Madame de Varonne had discharged the servants of her husband soon after his decease, and had only kept one maid, a cook, and Ambrose; but the time was now come, in which she must part with these likewise.

Ambrose, as I have said, entered her chamber with a log of wood, it being winter, which he was going to put on the fire, when Madame de Varonne said to him, I want to speak to you Ambrose. The tone of voice in which she pronounced these words, struck Ambrose, who, flinging down his log upon the hearth, exclaimed, Good God! Madam!—What is the matter? Do you know how much I owe the cook-maid, Ambrose?—You neither owe her, nor me, nor Mary any thing, you paid us all yesterday.—True; that was not what I meant to say—I—Ambrose, you must tell the cook and Mary, I have no further occasion for their services—And you—my good Ambrose—you must seek another place—Another place! What do you mean? No: I will live and die in your service: let what will happen, I will never quit you.—You do not know my situation, Ambrose—Madam—You do not know Ambrose—If they have lessened your pension so that you cannot maintain your other servants, so be it; you must part with them; it cannot be helped: but I hope I have not deserved to be turned away too. I am not mercenary, madam, and—But I am ruined, Ambrose—totally ruined. I have sold every thing I had to sell, and they have taken away my pension.—Taken away your pension! That cannot be—it cannot be.—It is nevertheless very true—Taken away your pension! Oh God!—We must adore the decrees of Providence, Ambrose, and submit without repining: the greatest consolation I find amidst my misfortunes, is to be perfectly resigned. Alas! How many other unhappy beings, on the wide surface of this earth, how many virtuous families are in my situation!

I have no children; my sufferings will be few, for I shall suffer alone.—No——no——no——replied Ambrose, with a broken voice.—No——You shall not suffer.—I have an arm and I can work.—My good Ambrose! answered Madame de Varonne, I never doubted of your attachment to me, but I will not abuse your kindness: all that I desire you to do for me, is to hire a small chamber, a garret; I have still money enough to support me for two or three months; I can work, I can spin; find some employment for me, if you can, and that is all I wish; all I can admit——

While she expressed herself in this manner, Ambrose stood fixed in silence, contemplating his mistress; and when she had finished, casting himself at her feet, exclaimed, oh, my dear, my honoured mistress, hear the determination, the oath of your poor Ambrose, who here vows to serve you to the end of his life; and more willingly, with more respect, more ready obedience, than ever he did before. You have fed me, clothed me, and given me the means of living happy for more than twenty years; I have often abused your bounty, and trespassed on your patience. Pardon, madam, the errors which a defective temper has occasioned me to commit, and assure yourself I will make you reparation. It is for that purpose only I pray the Father of Mercies to spare my life.—When he had ended, he rose, bathed in tears, and suddenly ran out of the room, without waiting for a reply.

You will easily imagine the lively and deep gratitude with which the heart of Madame de Varonne was penetrated, by a discourse like that she had heard; she found there were no evils so great, but might be alleviated by the feelings of benevolence. Ambrose returned in a few minutes, bringing in a little bag, which he laid upon the table. Thanks to God, to you, madam, and to my late master, I have saved these thirty guineas; from you they came, and to you of right they return.—What, Ambrose! rob you of the labour of twenty years! Oh heaven!—When you had money, madam, you gave
it

it to me ; now you have none, I give it back again ; and this is all money is good for. I dare say, madam, you have not forgot that I am the son of a brazier ; this was my first profession, which I still am master of ; for at those moments when I had nothing to do in the family, I have gone and assisted Nicault, one of my countrymen, rather than be idle. I will now return to my trade in earnest, and with a hearty good will.—This is too much, cried Madame de Varonne, how greatly unworthy of your virtues is the lot in which fortune has cast you, noble Ambrose !—I shall be happy, said Ambrose, if you, madam, can but reconcile yourself to such a change in your once happy condition.—Your attachment, Ambrose, consoles me for the loss of all, but how can I endure you should suffer thus for me ?—Suffer, madam, in labouring, and when my labour is so useful, so necessary ! no ; it will be happiness. Nicault is a good, a worthy man, and will not let me want ; his reputation is established in the town, and he is in need of just such an assistant ; I am strong, I can do as much work as two men ; we shall do very well. Madame de Varonne had not power to reply, she lifted up her eyes and hands to heaven, and answered with her tears.

The day following, however, the other two servants were discharged, and Ambrose hired a small, light, and neat room, up three pair of stairs, which he furnished with the remainder of his mistress's furniture. Thither he conducted her. She had a good bed, an easy chair, a small table, a writing desk, with pen, ink, and paper, a few books, which were arranged on four or five shelves, and a large wardrobe, in which was contained her linen, her wearing apparel, a provision of thread for her work, a silver fork and spoon, for Ambrose would not suffer her to eat with pewter, and the leathern purse which contained the thirty guineas. There were besides, in one corner of the room, behind the curtain, such earthen vessels as were necessary for her cookery.

This, madam, said Ambrose, is the best chamber I have been able to get, for the price you mentioned ;
there

there is but one room, but the girl will sleep upon a mat-tress, which lies rolled up under your bed.—How! a girl Ambrose!—Certainly, madam; how could you do without? She will go errands, help to dress and undress you, and do other necessary offices.—Nay, but Ambrose—She will cost you little, she is only thirteen, desires no wages, and will live very well on what you leave. As for me, I have settled every thing with Nicault; I told him I was obliged to leave you, was out of employment, and should be glad of work; he is well to do, is an honest man, and my countryman; it is only a step from this, and he is to give me ten-pence a day, and my board and lodging. Living is cheap in this town, and you, madam, will, I hope, be able to live on the ten-pence a day, and the ready money you have to supply extraordinary occasions. I did not chuse to say all this before your new servant, Sufannah, but I will now go and bring her.

Ambrose here stepped out, and presently returned, leading in a pretty innocent girl, whom he presented to Madame de Varonne, informing her that was the young person concerning whom he had spoken to her. Her parents, said he, are poor but industrious; they have six children, and, you madam, will do a good action, by taking this their eldest into your service. After this preface, Ambrose exhorted Susan, with a grave and commanding tone, to be good, and do her duty; then taking his leave of Madame de Varonne, went to his new employment with his friend Nicault.

Who may pretend to describe what passed in the soul of Madame de Varonne. Gratitude, admiration, astonishment overwhelmed her, not only at the generosity, but the sudden change of temper and behaviour in Ambrose. No man could shew greater respect than he did, who lately was so blunt and peevish: since he had become her benefactor, he was no longer the same; he added humility to benevolence, and delicacy to heroism; his heart instantly inspired him with every gentle precaution, lest he should wound the feelings of sensibility
and

and misfortune : he understood the sacred duty of imposing obligations upon others, and felt that no person is truly generous, who humbles, or even puts to the blush, those whom they assist.

The next day Madame de Varonne saw nothing of Ambrose till the evening, when he just called, and contriving to have Susan sent out for a moment, he drew from his pocket a bit of paper, in which his day's wages were wrapped, laid it on the table, and said, *There, Madam is my small mite* ; then calling in Susan, staid not for an answer, but returned to his friend Nicault. How sweet must have been his sleep after such labour ! how pleasing his dreams after a day so spent ! how cheerful was he when he awaked ! If we are so happy after doing a good deed, how inexpressible must be the pleasure of an heroic action.

Ambrose, faithful to the sublime duties he had imposed upon himself, paid every day a visit to Madame de Varonne, to leave with her the fruits of his industry ; he only received as much at the end of each month as would pay his washer-woman, and some bottles of beer drank on Sundays and holidays ; nor would he retain that small sum, but asked it as a gift of his mistress. In vain did Madame de Varonne, sensibly afflicted at thus robbing the generous Ambrose, persuade him she could live on less ; he would not hear her, or if he did, it was with such evident distress of heart that she was soon obliged to be silent.

Madame de Varonne, on her part, hoping to give some respite to the labours of Ambrose, worked without ceasing at netting. Susan assisted her, and went to sell the product of her industry ; but when she spoke to Ambrose of this, and exaggerated the profits, he would only reply, So much the better, I am glad of it, and immediately change the subject. Time produced no alteration in his conduct ; during four years he never in the least varied from the virtuous ardour with which he began.

The

The moment at length approached, in which Madame de Varonne was to experience remorse the most bitter, and pangs the most afflicting.

One night as she sat expecting Ambrose, as usual, she saw the servant of Nicault enter her chamber, who came to tell her Ambrose was so ill he was obliged to be put to bed. Madame de Varonne instantly desired the girl to conduct her to her master's house, and at the same time ordered Susan to go for a physician. Nicault, who had never seen her before, was a good deal surprized; she desired him to shew her the apartment of Ambrose.—The apartment, my lady! its impossible—Impossible! how? why?—One's obliged to go up a ladder to get into the loft where he lies, your ladyship—A ladder!—and a loft!—poor Ambrose—go—shew me where it is—But your ladyship will break your ladyship's neck, besides it is such a hole—your ladyship can't stand upright.—Madame de Varonne could not restrain her tears, she begged Nicault would instantly shew her the way, and he brought her to the foot of a little ladder, which she had much difficulty to climb; this led her into a dismal loft, in one corner of which Ambrose was lying upon a bed of straw—Ah! my dear Ambrose, cried she, in what a situation do I find you! And you told me you had a good lodging, that you were perfectly satisfied.—

Ambrose was not in a condition to reply, he had been light-headed some time, which she presently perceived, and was most sensibly and justly afflicted at the sight.

Susan at last arrived, followed by the physician, who was evidently surprized, at entering such an apartment, to see a lady, whose mien and superior deportment bespoke her rank, weeping in despair over a poor journeyman brazier in a straw-bed.—He approached the sick person, examined him attentively, and said they had called him to late.

Imagine the condition of Madame de Varonne when she heard this sentence pronounced.

Ah, poor Ambrose, said Nicault, but it's all his own fault

fault—he has been ill for these eight days past, but he would keep on; there was no persuading him, he would work. At last he could not hold his head up any longer, but for all that we had much ado to get him to bed.—He undertook more than he could go through, that he might board and lodge with us, and so now he has killed himself with downright labour.

Every word Nicault uttered was a mortal stab to the peace of Madame de Varonne; she addressed herself to the physician, and with wringing hands and flowing tears conjured him not to abandon Ambrose. He was a man of humanity; and besides, his curiosity was strongly incited by every thing he had heard and seen, he therefore readily engaged to spend part of the night with his patient. Madame de Varonne then sent for bedding, blankets, and sheets, and, with the assistance of Susan, made up a bed, on which Ambrose was gently laid by Nicault and the physician; after which she sat herself down on a stool, and gave free vent to her tears.

About four in the morning the physician went, after he had bled the patient, and promised to return at noon. As for Madame de Varonne, you may easily imagine she never quitted him a moment; she remained eight-and-forty hours at his bed-side without the least hope; at last, on the third day, the physician thought he perceived some favourable symptoms, and at night declared him out of danger.

I shall not attempt to describe the joy of Madame de Varonne when she saw Ambrose out of danger; she would have watched the night following, but Ambrose, who was now no longer light-headed, would by no means consent, and she returned home, overcome with fatigue. The physician came on the morrow to visit her, and she was so much obliged to him, so grateful for the vast attention he had paid to Ambrose, that she could not refuse to answer his question: she related her history, and satisfied his curiosity. Three days after this, he was obliged to return suddenly to Paris, for he did not reside

at

at St. Germain, leaving Madame de Varonne in good health, and Ambrose recovering.

The situation of Madame de Varonne, however, was at this instant as critical as it was distressing: in a week she had expended on Ambrose what little money she possessed, except just enough to supply them for four or five days. But Ambrose could not, without the most imminent danger, begin to work again so soon, and she shuddered with fear lest necessity should urge him to labour once more at the hazard of his life. Then it was that she felt all the horror of want, and reproached herself most bitterly for having accepted the money of the generous Ambrose. Had it not been for me, said she, he would have been happy; his industry would have procured him a comfortable livelihood: his faithful attachment to me has robbed him of ease, health, and happiness—nay, yet, perhaps, of life——And I must sink to the grave without acquitting this vast obligation——Acquitting?——Alas were the universe at my command, it would be impossible!——God alone can discharge a debt so sacred! God alone can worthily reward virtue so sublime!

One evening as Madame de Varonne sat profoundly absorbed in such like melancholy reflections, Susan came running, out of breath, to tell her that a great lady wanted to speak with her.—A lady! said her mistress, what lady? You are mistaken.—No, no, be quick, answered Susan, I saw her myself, and she said, says she, I want to speak with Madame de Varonne, who lives up three pair of stairs at M. Daviet's; she said this out of her coach window: a fine coach, with six fine horses; so as I happened to be standing at the door and heard her, I answered and said, says I, that's here, says I, an't please your ladyship; and so, says she, go, my dear, and tell Madame de Varonne, that I beg she will do me the honour to permit me to speak a few words with her;—whereupon I put my best leg foremost, and——

Susan was interrupted by two or three gentle taps on the door, which Madame de Varonne, with great emotion, rose to open. She drew back, and beheld a most beautiful

beautiful lady enter and advance with a timid, respectful, and compassionate air. Madame de Varonne ordered Susan to leave the room, and as soon as they were alone, the unknown lady began the conversation by saying, I am happy, madam, in being the first to inform you, that the king has at last come to the knowledge of your situation, and that his goodness means hereafter to recompence you for the former injustice of fortune towards you.—Oh, Ambrose! exclaimed Madame de Varonne, and clasped her hands, and raised her eyes to heaven, with the most forcible and expressive picture of joy and gratitude in her countenance.

Her visitant could not refrain from tears. She approached Madame de Varonne, and taking her affectionately by the hand, said, Come, madam, come to the apartments that are prepared for you, come—Oh! Madam, interrupted Madame de Varonne, what can I say? how speak;—Yet if I durst—I beg your pardon—but, madam, I have a benefactor—such a benefactor! suffer me to tell you how—I will leave you at full liberty, said the lady, and lest my company should at present be the least embarrassment, I will not even go with you to your house, I shall return homewards, but first I must conduct you to your coach, which waits at the door—My coach!—Yes, dear madam, come, let us lose no time.

In saying this, she presented her arm to Madame de Varonne, who scarce had power to descend the stairs. When they had reached the door, the lady desired one of her footmen to call *Madame de Varonne's servants*.—She thought herself in a dream, and her astonishment increased when she saw the footman beckon the carriage, which was simple and elegant, to the door, let down the step, and heard him say, my lady's carriage is ready. The unknown lady then accompanied her to her coach, took her leave, and stepped into her own carriage.

Madame de Varonne's footman waited to receive her orders, and she, with a gentle and trembling voice, desired

fired to be drove to the house of Nicault, the brazier. You will easily conceive, the lively emotion, the agitation, which the sight of that house occasioned in her heart—She drew the cord, she stopped, she opened the door herself, and leaning upon her footman's shoulder for support, entered the shop of Nicault.

The first object she beheld was Ambrose—Ambrose himself, in his working dress, scarce out of the bed of sickness, and again, notwithstanding his weakness, endeavouring to labour.—The tenderness, the satisfaction, the joy she felt, are unutterable; he was labouring for her, and she came to snatch him from these painful labours, to release him from fatigue and misery. Then it was she tasted, in all its purity, that deep and well founded gratitude which superior minds alone can taste.—Come, cried she with transport—Come, noble Ambrose—follow me—quit your labours and your cares; they are ended; your fate is changed; delay not a moment, but come.—

In vain did the astonished Ambrose beg an explanation, in vain did he desire time at least to put on his Sunday cloaths; Madame de Varonne was incapable of hearing, or of answering; she took hold of his arm, dragged him along, and obliged him to get into the carriage.—Would you please, madam, to be drove to your new house? said the servant—Her heart leaped within her—Yes, said she, fixing her eyes, that overflowed with tears, upon Ambrose—Yes—Drive us to our new house.

Away they went, and Madame de Varonne recounted every thing as it happened to Ambrose, who listened with a joy mixed with fear and doubt: he scarcely durst believe in happiness so extraordinary, so unhop'd. The carriage, at length, stopped at a neat little house, in the forest de St. Germain, and they alighted: as they entered the hall, they were met by the unknown lady, who had been waiting for their arrival, and who presented a paper to Madame de Varonne.—The king, said she,
has

has deigned to charge me with this, madam, that I might remit it to you; it is a brevet for a pension of ten thousand livres (four hundred guineas) a year, with a liberty of leaving half the sum to whoever you shall please to nominate at your decease.

This is indeed a benefaction, cried Madame de Varonne—Behold that person, madam, behold that nobly virtuous man, who is truly worthy of your protection, and the favour of his sovereign.

Ambrose, who had at first placed himself behind his mistress, felt his embarrassment increase at these words, and taking off his cap, retreated with a bashful air; for notwithstanding the excess of his joy, he felt a painful confusion at hearing himself so much praised; besides that he was a little vexed to be seen, for the first time, by so fine a lady, in his leathern apron, dirty jacket, and without his wig, and could not help regretting, in some degree, the want of his Sunday cloaths.

The unknown lady following, cried, Stop, Ambrose—stop—let me look at you, let me consider you a moment—Dear Madam, said Ambrose, bowing, I have done nothing but what was very natural, nothing to astonish any one.

Here Madame de Varonne interrupted him, to relate, which she did with rapidity and enthusiasm, how much she owed her support, her all, her life itself, to Ambrose. When she had ended, the unknown lady, deeply affected, sighed, and raising her eyes to heaven, said—And have I at last, after meeting so much ingratitude in the world, have I the exquisite delight of finding two hearts truly sensible, truly noble!—Adieu, madam, continued she—adieu—be happy;—this house, and all that it contains, is yours; you will receive directly the first quarter of your pension—As she finished she approached the door, but Madame de Varonne ran, bathed in tears, and threw herself at her feet. The lady raised, tenderly embraced her, and departed. She had scarcely quitted the threshold, before the door again opened, and the physician, to whom Ambrose owed his life, entered.

Madame

Madame de Varonne, the moment she beheld him, immediately comprehended the whole affair. After having testified the gratitude with which her heart overflowed, she learnt from him that the unknown lady was Madame de P**, who resided always at Versailles, where she had great influence. I have been her physician, said he, for these ten years; I know her benevolence, and was certain she would interest herself exceedingly in your behalf, when she had heard of your history. No sooner, indeed, had I related it, than she began to verify my hopes; she purchased this house, and obtained the pension of which she has given you the brevet.

As the physician was ending his recital, the servant entered, and informed Madame de Varonne supper was served up; she prevailed on the physician to stay, and, leaning upon the arm of Ambrose, walked into the other apartment, where she desired Ambrose to place himself by her side. Ambrose excused himself, and said, it was not proper he should sit at table with his honoured mistress. How, replied she, is not my benefactor and my friend my equal? The modest, the generous Ambrose obeyed, and with the physician on one side of her, and Ambrose on the other, Madame de Varonne enjoyed; that happy evening, all the pure and delicious pleasures, which gratitude and bliss inexpressible could inspire, and which a tender and a feeling heart could know.

You may well suppose that Ambrose had the next day, thanks to Madame de Varonne, a dress suitable to his new fortune; that his apartment was fitted up and furnished with every possible care; that Madame de Varonne during her whole life caused him to partake of her fortune, and that she never received money without recollecting, with the utmost susceptibility, the time when the faithful Ambrose brought his day's wages in a bit of paper, laid it upon the table, and said—*there, madam, is my small mite.*

THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
D U C H E S S OF C — — — :
FROM
ADELA AND THEODORE.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

I WAS born at Rome, and am descended from one of the most illustrious houses in Italy. Being the sole heiress of an immense fortune, no pains were spared to give me a suitable education. Brought up by the best of mothers, beloved by a tender father, and by a family of whom I was the only hope, Fortune and Nature seemed to have favoured me with their choicest gifts. I attained my fifteenth year, without having once experienced a single sorrow; without having known the slightest indisposition, or shed any other tears than those of tenderness and joy. I was fond to recollect the past; I enjoyed the present with transport; nor did I behold aught in the future but a situation equally prosperous and happy. A young lady, the daughter of an intimate friend of my mother's, was the companion of my infancy. Her character was irreproachable, and her heart not devoid of sensibility; but she wanted experience, and consequently, could neither counsel nor direct me. Nevertheless, I contracted a violent friendship for this young creature; and my confidence in her was unbounded. I loved and respected my mother; but I did not regard her as my friend, because she had permitted me to confer that endearing title on another: she had even a satisfaction in seeing me form such a dangerous connection.

nection. This indiscretion cost me dear : it was the chief source of all my misfortunes. My friend married to the Marquis of Venuzi, of whom she had been enamoured above a year. She had communicated her secret to me, and this confidence had but too much raised my imagination, and misled my heart. My friend, two days after the wedding, accompanied the Marquis to his delightful villa, thirty miles from Rome. My mother was of the party, and took me with her. The Marchioness of Venuzi was three years older than I. Her conduct seemed to bespeak a great share of prudence and good sense ; and therefore, although she was only in her nineteenth year, my mother left us at full liberty to enjoy each other's company alone, at whatever hour. One evening, after supper, the Marchioness proposed to me a walk in the park. At some distance from the house, we entered a little wilderness, and turning down one of the walks, we saw, very distinctly, a young gentleman on a garden-seat. On perceiving us, he arose ; and the great surprise which he expressed, excited the same sensation in us. The moon shone on his face ; we were near him ; and were equally struck by his graceful figure and noble air. After a moment's silence, as he did not retire, the Marchioness asked him who he was. He answered her with equal respect and politeness ; but refused to mention his name, and immediately went away. We returned directly to the house, much surprised at this adventure, which we did not fail to communicate to the Marquis. He smiled, he suffered us to perceive that this young man was not unknown to him ; and as I expressed a great desire for some further information concerning him ; 'all that I can tell you,' he proceeded, is, that this young man is independent, and of an illustrious family. He has for a long time ardently desired to see you ; and, if you consent to it, I will to-morrow acquaint you with his name.' The next day I renewed my enquiries, but without receiving any satisfactory answer. At night, when my mother had retired to her chamber, I repaired to my friend : we shut ourselves up
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in her closet, and talked over the adventure of the preceding evening ; when, on a sudden, the door was opened, and I saw the Marquis of Venuzi enter, holding in one hand a dark lantern, and with the other introducing the very same young man whom I had such an inclination to know. I was quite motionless with surprise. ‘ I present to you’ said the Marquis, approaching me, ‘ my prisoner, whose liberty, I believe,’ continued he, laughing, ‘ it is no longer in my power to restore, since he has been so imprudent as to wish to see you a second time.’—At these words I blushed, and felt inexpressible embarrassment. Notwithstanding I was so young, I had some confused idea of the consequences of such an adventure. I was that moment resolved to leave the room, to hasten to my mother, and to confess all to her ; but curiosity detained me, and I forgot my duty. The Marquis, assuming a more serious air, informed us, that he was going to entrust us with an important secret. ‘ I know your discretion,’ said he ; ‘ and I am persuaded that you will both justify the confidence you have inspired.’—After this preamble, the Marquis made me promise inviolable secrecy ; and the young man informed us that he was called the Count of Belmire ; that his father, the Marquis of Belmire, was brother to the Duke of C——, one of the richest noblemen in Naples ; that the Duke, who was the head of the family, having quarrelled with his brother, had contrived to ruin him at court, and had continued to persecute him with such rancour, that he was obliged to leave his country, and settle in France ; where he had an affair of honour four years afterward, that obliged him to seek another retreat ; that the Marquis of Venuzi, his intimate friend, being then in France, and about to return to Italy, had prevailed upon him to accept of an asylum, in this very house, where he had been concealed three months ; that he himself (the young Count) having heard me frequently mentioned, could not resist the curiosity he had to see me ; that after the transient glimpse of me by moon-light, he had been more urgent than ever with
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the Marquis to procure him an interview on which he set so high a value ; and finally, that he was the next day to accompany his father to Venice. After having heard this information, I rose, and notwithstanding all the entreaties of the Marquis to the contrary, immediately retired to my chamber, overwhelmed with sorrow. I durst not reflect on what had just passed. I was afraid to interrogate my heart, or to examine my conduct. I could not conceive how I had been capable of attending, unknown to my mother, and at midnight, to a young man a stranger, who had presumed to talk to me of love. I perceived clearly, that I ought to distrust the advice of the Marquis of Venuzi, and that even his wife was not in a situation to direct me. I shuddered at the danger before me. A prophetic horror seemed to whisper, that I was going irrecoverably to lose my reputation, my tranquillity, and, in a word, all the happiness which I had hitherto enjoyed. But the Marchioness of Venuzi soon resumed her wonted influence over me. She incessantly talked to me of the Count of Belmire. These dangerous conversations contributed to pervert my understanding, but could not dissipate my melancholy thoughts. At the expiration of three months we returned to Rome. Towards the end of the winter, there was a variety of entertainments. The Marquis of Venuzi, in particular, gave a masked ball, at which I was present with my mother. About two in the morning the Marchioness proposed to me, that I should go into her room to change my dress. We left the ball-room, and on crossing a small gallery, but indifferently lighted, I observed that a mask followed us. What was my surprise, when the mask, approaching me, and throwing himself at my feet, was discovered to be the Count of Belmire. Notwithstanding my emotion, and the secret joy I felt at seeing him again, my first idea was to endeavour to escape. But he detained me by my robe, entreated me to grant him a moment's conversation : he conjured the Marchioness to prevail upon me to hear him : she united her entreaties to his, and,

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at last, I had the weakness to consent. The Count then told me, that his father's affair was happily accommodated; that he had been for six weeks past at Naples, having had the satisfaction of terminating his difference with the Duke his brother, by a very cordial reconciliation. 'My father,' continued he, 'sets out in a month for France, in order to arrange his private affairs in that kingdom, before he finally settles in his native country. And I, before I accompany him in his journey, was solicitous to know my fate. I am come privately from Naples, solely to learn whether the tender homage which I have presumed to offer, be absolutely rejected. Speak, Madam: if you hate me, I shall bid you an everlasting adieu. Despised by you, I am undone; I renounce Italy for ever. Speak: your answer will recal me to my country, or sentence me to irrevocable exile.—As the Count pronounced these last words, I could not refrain from tears. This answer was but too well understood: he required no other. A thousand times he assured me of his unceasing love. Certain of my affection, and of returning to Rome in six months; entitled by his rank and expectations to demand my hand, although his fortune was not so considerable as mine; every thing seemed to justify his hopes; in which, nevertheless, in spite of myself, my heart could not participate. Two months after this interview, which for ever destroyed all the tranquillity of my life, the Duke of C—— came to Rome; and I saw him at a *Conversazione* * at the French Ambassador's. When he was introduced to me, I felt a kind of shock, an unaccountable sensation, which, after all, might proceed from the extreme bad terms in which the Marquis de Venuzi had spoken of him; who, in mentioning the Duke's persecution of the Marquis of Belmiere, had described him as a character equally vindictive and hypocritical. The Duke of C——, who was then about thirty-six, was perfectly handsome; but one could not help remarking in his eyes and eye-brows, a something gloomy and inauspicious, which struck one

* *An Assembly in Italy, is thus called.*

more forcibly, at first sight, than the nobleness and regularity of his figure. His look was piercing and austere; when he would endeavour to soften it, he rendered it ambiguous and deceitful. His deportment was in general contemptuous and haughty; and although, in some respects, he was not deficient in politeness, his manner was equally peremptory and imperious. Elated by his birth, his employments, his riches, his interest at court, and his success with the fair, nothing, he thought, was ever to resist his inclinations, or oppose his pleasure. Impetuous, violent, and corrupted by prosperity and pride, he could neither subdue his passions, nor rise superior to resentment. Implacable, through weakness and vanity, he gloried in never forgiving. His enmity was heightened by rancour; and he would sacrifice every thing to the horrid pleasure he experienced in the gratification of revenge. Such was the Duke of C——. I felt an invincible antipathy to him, the first moment I beheld him. Unfortunately for me, I inspired him with very different sentiments. He procured an introduction to my mother; and, a fortnight after, my father declared to me, that the Duke had demanded me in marriage, and that I must prepare for the ceremony in a month. My father added, ‘I have given my word without waiting for your consent; for I took it for granted, that you would accept with pleasure the greatest match in Italy, a man that adores you, and whose person is so agreeable.’—I received this declaration (which appeared to me like a sentence of death) without being able to utter a single word. My father loved me; but he was absolute. Besides, what could I say? Had I even the consolation of applying to my mother? With what face could I avow my error, and confess that I had disposed of my heart without her approbation? It was then I perceived, in its full extent, the fatal imprudence of my conduct; and that the greatest misfortune that can befall a young woman, is the not having regarded her mother as her true friend and confidant. Deprived thus of the sweet resource of uttering my complaints to
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some soothing friend, I concealed my sufferings and grief within my own breast, and carefully avoided the Marchioness of Venuzi, whose dangerous advice I dreaded. Obedience alone, I thought could expiate my error. I submitted to my fate, and sacrificed my happiness to the deference which I paid to the command of my parents. I married the Duke of C——, and set out almost immediately with him for Naples. When we arrived in that city, and entered the palace where I was to spend my life, I experienced sensations of grief too poignant to be expressed. The Duke, who attributed my melancholy to my affection for my parents, endeavoured to divert my attention by the protestation of a passion which it was not in my power to return. I appeared at court; and I soon perceived that the Duke was extremely jealous. This circumstance, however, gave me little concern. I would gladly have retired from every scene of fashionable dissipation: but the vanity of the Duke, notwithstanding my apparent aversion to gaiety, and his disposition to jealousy, was too predominant to permit it. When I had been married about seven months, I learned that the Marquis of Belmire had died in France; that by his will, he had appointed the Duke guardian of his son; and that the latter, on his return to Italy, had been taken ill at Turin. A fortnight after the Duke entered my apartment, and informed me, that he had just received a letter from his nephew, whose health was happily re-established.—‘He will not come to Naples,’ added the Duke; ‘but he has written to you, to entreat you to prevail upon me, to grant him permission to make a tour for two years. Here is the letter.’—He then gave me the letter with the seal broken. I took it trembling, and, in a faltering voice, read aloud what follows:

‘MADAM,

‘Although I have not the happiness of being known by you, I persuade myself that I am too unfortunate not to hope to inspire you with some sentiments of compassion.

sion. I have lost the tenderest and best of fathers. Grief and despair had almost brought me to the grave: the cruel tenderness of my friends has recalled me to life. But to what an existence am I restored! I have lost all that could endear it to me! Forgive me, Madam, for troubling you with sorrows in which you are not interested, but with which my heart is overwhelmed. Oh! condescend at least to pity and excuse me!—My father, by his last will, has placed me under an entire subjection to my uncle; but I cannot obey the order to return to Naples. That city is now become hateful to me. It was there he lived so many years. Every thing there will recal the most distracting ideas. No, I can never go thither! I am sure, Madam, that you can imagine how very strong, how natural this reluctance must be; and that you will have the goodness to engage my uncle to revoke an order which it is not in my power to obey. Obtain for me, madam, the permission to travel—to fly—to banish myself from Naples;—in a word, to carry far from Italy that anguish and those sorrows, which I shall retain to the last moment of my life.

‘ I am, with respect, &c.

‘ The Count of Belmire.’

I can give no idea of the grief and terror which I experienced in reading this letter. I was apprehensive that it would be impossible for the Duke not to understand the double meaning it conveyed. Of all men he was the most mistrustful and suspicious. Nevertheless, as he did not know that his nephew had been at Rome, and was persuaded that I never could have seen him, he had not the most distant idea of the truth. For my part, being unable to keep within my breast the distracting sentiments by which I was agitated, I was so imprudent as to write a letter the next day to the Marchioness of Venuzi: complaining of my cruel fate, and deploring the fatal passion which I could not conquer. The Marchioness, in her answer, questioned me concern-
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ing the Duke's behaviour. I was explicit in my reply : I did not scruple to declare, that every day I discovered such faults and vices in the Duke, together with such a ferocity of character, as but too well justified the antipathy I had conceived for him. Thus, by the reiterated imprudence of my conduct, I actually compleated, as it were, the digging of that abyfs, which was already half open under my feet.—About this time I again enjoyed the happiness of seeing my father and mother : I was near my time : they came to Naples to be with me : I was delivered of a daughter : I asked, and obtained permission to suckle her. This delightful employment, while it lasted, suspended all my sorrows, and made me insensible to the ill treatment of the Duke, who, for a long time, had ceased to put any restraint upon his conduct, and had permitted me to behold all the violence and impetuosity of his character. The day after I had weaned my child, he came to me, and said that we must immediately set out for a seat he had, thirty-six miles from Naples. My daughter was with me : I took her in my arms, and followed the Duke without uttering a word. We got into the carriage : I held my daughter on my lap ; I caressed her. The Duke was silent, and seemed, during the whole journey to be quite absorbed in thought. When we arrived at the castle, we passed over a drawbridge : I shuddered at the rattling of the chains ; and at that instant, by a kind of involuntary impulse, I looked at the Duke.—‘ What ails you,’ said he : ‘ the antique appearance of this castle seems to surprise you ? What then, do you think you are entering a prison ?’—He uttered these words with a forced and malicious smile ; and I could perceive in his eyes such a cruel pleasure, as made me ready to sink with horror. Wishing, however, to conceal it, I reclined my head on my daughter's : I could not refrain from tears. Feeling them trickle on her face, she began to cry : her cries pierced my very soul : I pressed her to my heart with sensations of undescribable tenderness ; and I wept and sobbed again. In this situation I alighted from the carriage : the Duke

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tearing, as it were, my child from my arms, gave her to one of his servants, and seizing one of my hands, he led, or rather dragged me towards the castle. He then made me ascend a stair-case, which terminated in a long gallery. The evening came on: the gallery, which we were crossing, was very spacious and gloomy. The Duke, at first walked extremely fast: then stopping, suddenly, 'You tremble,' said he, 'whence can proceed this terror? Are you not with a husband whom you love, and whose duty is to protect you?'—'Oh, Heavens!' I exclaimed, 'what means that gloomy and distracted look, that terrible tone of voice?'—'Come, come,' he resumed, "we are going to finish the explanation."—At these words, almost carrying me in his arms, (for I could neither follow him nor walk) he dragged me out of the gallery into a large bed-chamber. I flung myself into a chair, and gave a free passage to my tears. He left the room, but soon returned with a candle, which he set on a table opposite to me, seating himself by it. I durst not look at him: scarcely breathing, sinking with terror, my eyes cast down, I waited trembling, for his breaking silence. My memory instantly pictured all the errors of my conduct: I had a confused apprehension that the fatal secret of my heart had been divined: that heart, which had cherished a guilty passion, palpitated with terror, and trembling before an irritated judge. Oh! with what resolution would innocence have inspired me! But I was depressed by consciousness; and I had not the fortitude to support the dreadful forebodings which that consciousness excited. At last the Duke spoke: 'You have sufficiently enjoyed the secret reproaches of your conscience: it is now time to overwhelm you with confusion. Read those letters; I have copied them myself.'—He then gave me a packet of papers, and seeing that I hesitated to take them, he took a sheet, and read it aloud. From the first words, I knew it was one of the letters which I had written to the Marchioness of Venuzi, in which I had mentioned without reserve, not only the fatal sentiments of my heart, but
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my unconquerable aversion to the Duke.—‘ Ah!’ I exclaimed, ‘ I am undone!’—‘ Perfidious woman,’ replied the Duke, ‘ I have not then had the happiness to please you! I selected you; I preferred you to all other women: I adored you, and you hated me. You fancied yourself unhappy: I inspire you with an *unconquerable aversion*! Well then, I will justify your hatred: I will give you sufficient reason to detest me. Betrayed, dishonoured by you, do you think I can suffer such outrages with impunity?’—‘ Hold!’ interrupted I, ‘ you may accuse and punish, without aspersing me. I am guilty, indeed, in some degree; but if I have not been able to subdue an unhappy passion, at least your honour and mine are yet unsullied; and I have only to reproach myself with the imprudent confession which Friendship extorted from me.’—‘ Perjured woman,’ returned the Duke in a rage, ‘ hear your condemnation.’—Then taking up another of the letters, he read the following passage: ‘ That object, alas, which nothing can eradicate from my heart, is as much to be pitied as myself. Does he not know to what excess he is beloved? Does he not know how severely I reproach myself for a confession, which now renders me so guilty and so wretched?’—I recollected but too well this passage in one of my letters. I also perfectly remembered, that I had not only forbore to name the Count of Belmire in any of them, but that I had even spoken of him in such an indirect manner, that it was impossible to know from these letters, at what period the attachment I confessed first took its rise; and the Duke, who had been violently jealous, at the time of our marriage, of two persons at the court of Naples, who had given proofs of particular attention to me, had not the least doubt that one of these was the object of my passion.

This supposition left him no room to hesitate about my guilt; for, after the passage he had just read, it appeared unquestionable, that I had avowed my sentiments since my marriage. The only method, therefore, which I could take to justify myself, was to declare, that when

I gave him my hand, I had no longer a heart to dispose of. But I well knew what a despicable opinion he had conceived of the sex, and how very much disposed he was to entertain the most odious suspicions. Sensible of this, the welfare of my daughter would not permit me to be more explicit. I did not leave Rome till six weeks after my marriage: and had the Duke understood that I had conceived an affection for another, before I became acquainted with him, it was very probable that he would harbour the most injurious doubts respecting the birth of my daughter. Besides, this confession might have led to a discovery of the whole truth. He might have soon recollected a thousand circumstances to ascertain it; the letter which I had received from his nephew, my emotions in reading it, my blushes every time he mentioned his name to me; he might, at last, have discovered the connection between the Marquis of Venuzi, and the Count of Belmire's father; in a word, if I had destroyed that prepossession which centered all his suspicions at Naples, I should have risked a secret, which it would be impossible to betray, without exposing the object of my affection to all the fury of his resentment. And this was the more to be dreaded, as the Count of Belmire, who was only nineteen, was absolutely dependent upon the Duke, who was his uncle and guardian. All these reflections rose at once to my imagination, and involved me in unspeakable embarrassment. Thus, not daring to justify myself, what answer could I give? The Duke interpreted my silence as the tacit confession, which demonstrated his own dishonour and my disgrace. His passion then knew no bounds. He rose; and with his face inflamed, and his eyes sparkling with fury, 'you have nothing then,' said he, 'to alledge in your defence?'—'Alas,' answered I, 'are you in a situation to hear me? I am innocent: I invoke Heaven to witness it.'—'You, innocent!' interrupted he, 'dare you persist in it? Have you not written yourself that your lover knows to what excess he is beloved?'—'And yet,' replied I, bursting into tears, 'I am innocent. Heaven

Heaven knows that I am.'—'Oh, thou monster of deceit!' exclaimed the Duke, 'tremble at the vengeance that is ready to overwhelm thee.' At these words, uttered in a menacing and dreadful tone, I thought I heard the inevitable sentence of destruction: I threw myself upon my knees, and lifting up my hands to Heaven: 'O God,' I cried, 'God, my only refuge, protect me!'—'Rise, said the Duke, in a milder voice, 'sit down and attend to me.'—I obeyed; looking at him with a timid and suppliant air. He was for some moments silent: then fetching a deep sigh, 'you ought to be sensible,' said he, 'to what a degree I am offended; you, who accuse me of being passionate and vindictive; you, ungrateful woman, to whom I have hitherto given only proofs of love; you, who have such just reason now to dread the effects of my vengeance. Nevertheless, it is yet possible for me to forgive you. But your sincerity only can disarm my anger: remember that, henceforth, the slightest concealment will irrecoverably ruin you. I can be content with one victim; but one I am determined to have. Name instantly the vile seducer, who has thus made you violate the most sacred vows, the most sacred duties.'—'No,' interrupted I, 'no, I have broken no vows, I have violated no duties.'—'I will know,' replied the Duke, raising his voice, 'I will know the name of your lover. I command you to tell me.'—At this moment I anticipated all the horror of my fate; but with the sense of my danger, I received an accession of courage; and, preferring death itself to the base action he proposed, 'If,' replied I, 'you must have a victim, sacrifice her whom you have in your power. Let the whole weight of your vengeance fall on me; for the name you demand, you shall never know.'—Astonished and confounded, at this unexpected intrepidity, the Duke sat for some time motionless. He could find no words expressive of his rage. At last it burst out; 'Wretch!' said he, 'I shall never know it! Ah! I perceive that you have no idea to what excesses I can proceed: you do not yet know me.'

me.'—'I expect every thing, and, miserable as I am, I can bid defiance to death.'—'Death! Cease thus to flatter thyself. Go; I have not destined such a consolation for thee. For a year past, I have been fostering my hatred and revenge in the bosom of my soul; I have been meditating the punishment of thy infidelity; and dost thou think that the vengeance of a moment can satisfy me? No, thou shalt not die. Thy tomb, indeed, is prepared; but thou must descend into it alive; nor shalt thou find there that death which thou desirest.'—These dreadful words chilled my blood; my eyes closed; and I sunk senseless on the floor. When I recovered, I found myself in the arms of my women. I enquired eagerly for one of them who had ever evinced the tenderest affection for me, and who was the only one that had accompanied me from Rome. They informed me that she was left behind at Naples. It was then evident, that the Duke had expressly ordered her not to attend me; as no doubt, he was apprehensive of a witness who would be so vigilant and troublesome, perhaps, as to counteract his views. This circumstance heightened my terror beyond conception. I passed the night, encircled by my women; under a sensible constraint in their presence, yet dreading to be alone; neither daring to complain before them, nor to send them away; and internally suffering all the pangs which recollection and regret, which terror and the expectation of some dreadful catastrophe, could excite. About six in the morning, I desired them to lead me to my daughter's chamber. She was still asleep: I dismissed my women, and sat down by her cradle. The sight of her, far from mitigating, did but augment my sorrows.—'Alas, dear child,' said I, 'thou sleepest in peace! What sweet repose dost thou enjoy! Thou canst neither imagine, nor partake with thy wretched mother, the sorrows that distract her. I see thee, perhaps, for the last time. Receive, O receive my tenderest blessings. Gracious God,' continued I, falling upon my knees, I submit to my dreadful fate; but let my daughter, my dear daughter, be

be happy. May she live in innocence and peace. If they have the inhumanity to tear her from me, be thou, O God, her father and protector!"—My tears and sobbings now increased, and deprived me of utterance. At this instant the door flew open, and the Duke appeared. I shuddered at his aspect; my tears ceased to flow; I rose; but being unable to support myself, I sunk upon a sofa.—'Well,' said the Duke, 'has reflection taught you to be more reasonable? Are you sensible of all the consequences you hazard by resistance to my will?'—A deep sigh was my only answer.—'That name which I have demanded,' continued the Duke, 'are you still determined that I shall never know it?'—I lifted my eyes to Heaven; I persisted in my silence.—'I insist upon a positive answer, said he; 'will you name him or not?'—'I cannot,' answered I.—'Ah!' cried the Duke, 'thou hast pronounced thy own sentence! Look at that child, and take leave of her for ever.'—'No,' interrupted I, 'you cannot be so barbarous as to tear her from me. Oh, leave me my child! Let me see her at least sometimes, and I will endure, without murmuring, whatever your hatred can inflict. Alas, my Lord, is your heart then quite inaccessible to pity? Oh! if it be true, whatever be the sufferings you have prepared for me, you will be much more an object of compassion than myself. But I cannot believe it. No, you will not rob me of my child for ever!'—That moment my daughter awaked: she opened her eyes, and smiling upon her father, lifted up her little hands, almost clasped, towards him.—'Alas,' said I, 'she seems to plead for me. Oh, my child, my dear child, why canst thou not speak? Thou wouldst soften thy father!'—I was then going to take her in my arms; but the Duke seized her: 'Leave her,' said he, 'she is no longer yours.'—'Oh,' cried I, 'take, take my life, or restore me my child!'—I threw myself at his feet; I bathed them with my tears; I embraced his knees. The barbarian, unmoved, seemed to enjoy my humiliation: he contemplated me for a moment in this situation; then
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spurning me from him in a rage, he went some steps towards the door. I followed him, still on my knees, crying out, 'my daughter, my daughter!'—The child, terrified, uttered a plaintive cry, stretching her little arms towards me. She seemed to bid me a last mournful adieu. Alas! at that instant I lost sight of her: the Duke rushed furiously out of the room, and left me in agonies of despair. He returned a moment after, and made me go into my own apartment. Then composing his countenance, 'You think,' said he, 'that I have an obdurate heart; and yet.'—He stopped, his eyes bent upon the ground; those eyes, whose wild and ill-boding looks, might have discovered his vile deceit. I was in his power; I had no idea of his dreadful views; I could perceive no advantage that he could derive from dissimulation: I was only eighteen: I thought that, at last, he had begun to reproach himself with this excess of cruelty; and that, at least, he should mitigate the punishment on which he had meditated before. A ray of hope somewhat revived my heart; I again talked to him of my daughter; the Duke heard me with a gloomy air, but not expressive of displeasure: he even affected to be then susceptible of a tenderness and compassion that he was desirous to conceal. He gave me to understand, that his affection for me had alone impelled him to such violent measures; and that if I would take care of my health, I might see my daughter again. So dear a hope made me forget all my sufferings. Seeing the Duke less cruel, I began to conceive myself more guilty. After the letters which he had read, I thought it natural that he should suspect me of absolute infidelity; and his hatred was an obvious consequence. I excused the violence of his conduct; I was deeply impressed by that compassion which he had affected for my sufferings; and, while the most sincere repentance suffused my eyes with tears, the cruel author of my woes was secretly exulting in the success of his black artifices, and was preparing every thing for my destruction.

A fever,

A fever, occasioned by the violent agitations I had undergone, obliged me to go to bed. The Duke then appeared to feel the utmost anxiety : he dispatched an express to Naples for two physicians : he never quitted my bed-side : he affected the greatest tenderness for me before my women : when we were alone, he said every thing to persuade me that his affection was much stronger than his resentment : and he positively assured me, that as soon as my fever had left me, I should see my child again. At this promise I forgot all the sufferings he had made me endure : I snatched one of his hands, and pressed it between mine ; and I bedewed with tears of gratitude that barbarous hand, which in a few hours was to drag me from my chamber, and to plunge me in a dreadful dungeon. The physicians assured him that my illness was not so dangerous ; and their practice at Naples being urgent, they set out in two days. The very morning of their departure, the anxiety which the Duke expressed for me seemed to be greater than ever ; and although I had no longer any fever, he obliged me to keep my bed. As he had made all my women sit up with me the three preceding nights, they were overcome by fatigue, and he now dismissed them to take repose for the whole day ; declaring that he would nurse me himself, with one of his valets, and an old woman, the keeper of the castle. The choice of these two witnesses was not the result of accident. He selected them in preference to any of his other servants, because he knew them each to be equally credulous and ignorant. The curtains of my bed were drawn, and I thought that my women were still attending me, when, at noon, I perceived that there was no one in my chamber but the two persons I have just mentioned. I expressed my surprise at this. The Duke came to my bedside, assuring me that I should not be the worse attended on that account, and that he would not leave me.—‘ Oh, why then ? ’ I exclaimed with great emotion : ‘ I am no longer ill ! ’—To this question he gave me no other answer, than begging me not to talk, and to endeavour to compose myself. He then sat down by my bedside. I felt a secret uneasiness, without

out knowing why ; and my eyes were suffused with tears. He now appeared very much disturbed and agitated ; and I observed a very extraordinary alteration in his countenance. About three in the afternoon, he desired to see my arm : I presented it trembling : he felt my pulse : on a sudden he started up : he ran to my two new attendants : he told the valet aloud to go that instant to the stables, and send an express to Naples for a Physician ; and the old woman he dispatched in all haste for the Chaplain. When he had given these orders, he exclaimed with a voice of grief and consternation, ' She is dying, she is dying.'—Imagine, if possible, the excess of my astonishment and terror ! My first idea was to get up, and endeavour to escape ; but I sunk down again upon my bed without strength, with a palpitation of heart which deprived me of respiration, and a terror which chilled me, and left me quite motionless. My two attendants, after having each received orders that must take them at least three quarters of an hour to execute, instantly left me and the Duke together. He then came to me, and presenting me a cup : ' Here,' said he, take this draught.'—At these words my hair stood erect ; a cold sweat ran down my face ; it was the last moment, I thought, of my life : for I had not a doubt that he was giving me poison.—' Drink it, resumed he.'—' Alas !' answered I, ' what is it you are giving me ?'—' What you must drink.'—' Leave me then time to implore Infinite Mercy !'—' Dare you suspect me ? Do you accuse me of a crime ?'—' Alas, I accuse my own imprudence and my hard fate. Oh, my God !' I continued, clasping my hands, ' forgive me, forgive my persecutor ; comfort my father and mother ; protect my child !'—After this short prayer, I felt all my courage revive. I hoped even that my resignation would render me worthy to appear before God. I looked at the Duke with a steady eye. He was pale, trembling, and disconcerted. He spoke some words scarce articulate, and then raising my head with one hand, with the other he applied the cup to my lips. I no longer hesitated : without the least resistance, I drank all the liquor he gave me ;
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and believing that I had now received my death, I sunk down upon my pillow. Some moments after, my eyes grew heavy, and closed; a total stupefaction deprived me of my speech and of my senses, and I fell into a deep lethargy. In about half an hour, the valet and old woman returned. The Duke, with his hair in disorder, and his face bathed in tears, ran to meet them, and told them I had just expired. He brought them again into my chamber, in order, he added, to have a confirmation of his misfortune, or to assist me if I had yet any remains of life. He approached my bed; and having had the precaution to draw my curtains close, and make the room extremely dark, he pretended to give me all imaginable assistance. At last he appeared to abandon himself to the most violent grief. The Chaplain arrived: he ordered him to read the prayers for the dead. In the mean time, my women who had just awaked, and all the servants, came crowding into my room. The Duke was upon his knees by my bedside: my two attendants told their fellow-servants all the endeavours that had been used to recover me. After this, the Duke half-opened my curtains for a moment: they saw me pale and lifeless, and not one had any doubt of my death. The Duke made every body retire into the next room, except the Chaplain, a venerable man of eighty, who remained with him, and continued the prayers for the dead till midnight. He then ordered all his servants to retire to rest. He declared that I should not be interred till the next evening, and that not being able to tear himself from me, he should stay there the remainder of the night. He shut all the doors of my apartment. He ordered the Chaplain, and my two attendants, to wait his orders in an antichamber, that was separated from my apartment by three large rooms. He told them that he should not leave me till seven in the morning, and that he chose to remain alone with me, that he might not be disturbed in his grief and in his prayers. The whole family, exhausted by fatigue, eagerly accepted the permission to retire, and, by four o'clock in the morning, every one was asleep. Then, by degrees, recovering
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from my lethargy, I awoke. On opening my eyes, and looking round me, I perceived the Duke standing by my bedside. I started at the sight of him; although I had not any remembrance of what had passed. But afterward, looking steadily at him, I had a confused recollection that he was exasperated against me. I felt an emotion of terror: I turned my head away; and being desirous of composing myself, that I might recollect some ideas of what had happened, a thousand vague and fantastic forms rose in my imagination, and I sunk into a stupid reverie, which was followed by a kind of drowsiness. The Duke then gave me a smelling bottle, and made me take some drops of a liquor, which entirely revived me. I rose up; I looked around me with astonishment. My ideas growing clearer by degrees, I recollected, that I had thought I was taking poison, and I almost questioned my existence.—‘Oh!’ I exclaimed at last, ‘by what miracle am I restored to life?’—‘You have experienced only an imaginary terror,’ said the Duke: ‘compose yourself, and banish these injurious apprehensions.’—I durst not answer: I half drew my curtains: I looked round the room, and seeing that I was alone with the Duke, my terrors the more sensibly increased, as I had now entirely recovered my senses.—‘Why then,’ said I, ‘do you watch me alone?’—‘You shall know it presently,’ said he, ‘now get up.’—At these words he brought me a gown; he assisted me to put it on; and supporting me in his arms, he led, or rather carried, me to a great chair. As he saw me still weak and trembling, he made me take some more of the drops which he had just given me; and after a moment’s silence, ‘I will now,’ said he, ‘conceal nothing from you. The draught you took yesterday was a sleeping potion.’—‘For what?’—‘Hear me without interruption. You have betrayed and dishonoured me: I have offered you your pardon, and you have refused it. Convicted of infidelity, you still cherish in your heart a guilty passion. Neither my anger nor my threats have been able to persuade you to declare to me the name of your lover. You thought, perhaps, that my regard for your
family

family would prevent me from taking your child from you, and depriving you of liberty. You thought no doubt, (for there is not a crime of which your hatred will not think me capable) you thought that the only method I could adopt to avenge myself, was secretly to attempt your life, and your *invincible aversion* for me could easily determine you to die. But know, at last, that you shall live, and that you shall be torn for ever from your parents, your friends, your servants, and the whole world.'—'O Heaven,' I exclaimed; 'and do you think, barbarous man, that an affectionate father, and the best of mothers will not demand me at your hands?'—'They will receive to-morrow,' replied the Duke, 'the false intelligence of your death.'—'Great God! and how will you be able.'—'I have already announced your death in the castle. During your profound sleep, all my people beheld you, as they imagined, dead.'—'Alas!' interrupted I, 'I exist no longer then but for you! I see all the horrors of my fate!'—'You do not yet know all,' said the Duke; 'learn that I have under this castle some vast caverns, unknown to all the world, and to which the light never comes.'—'Oh! God! I am undone then! I am lost for ever!'—'No,' resumed the Duke, 'your fate is still in your own power. I can instantly go and awake your people, and declare that you were only in a lethargy. I have not yet sent my letter to your father. I can yet restore you to the world, and forgive you. I only exact a word, a single word from you. I must have a victim; I have already declared it. Name your lover, and you shall resume your rights: I will restore you to the world, to life!'—'What is it you propose to me? To deliver up to your resentment an object, who, I repeat it, has never injured you? Oh! I should be unworthy to live if I could have the baseness to consent to it!'—'Think well of it,' said the Duke, darting at me a furious look, 'yet another refusal, and I will drag you to that dark abode, from which nothing can release you. To-morrow, your father and your mother will

will be either deploring your death, or rejoicing in your recovery. To-morrow, you will once more behold your daughter and the day, or you will be for ever deprived of light, and groaning at the bottom of a horrid dungeon. In a word, to-morrow we shall see you in this castle, enjoying perfect health, or we shall be attending the solemnities of your funeral. Reflect seriously upon it. This moment past, and not a hope of pardon is left. In vain would you implore it by repentance ; I shall no longer have it in my power to grant it.'

At this urgent and dreadful speech I rose in the utmost consternation. I turned with terror towards the door, and giving a lamentable shriek, 'Ah, me!' said I, 'am I then abandoned by all the world? Oh my daughter! I am to live, and I am never to see thee more! My father, my mother, to-morrow you will deplore my death. My child! oh let me once more see my child!' — 'Speak but one word,' answered the Duke, 'and in a quarter of an hour your child shall be in your arms.' — At these words I felt my heart rending; I remained silent a moment. The Count of Belmore, it occurred to me, was absent; he was not to return for a year; in that time it might be easy for me to inform him of his danger; and besides an ingenuous confession would demonstrate my innocence. But, on a sudden, recollecting the cruelty of my persecutor, I as hastily rejected this groundless temptation. 'Who,' thought I, 'will assure me, that this confession will restore my child and my liberty? Ought I not rather to fear that the Duke, certain of my aversion, will never abandon the vengeance he has meditated, or, at least, that he will be content only to mitigate its inhuman rigour? And, in this doubt, can I be tempted to abandon to his rage the object I have loved?' — All these reflections occurred to me with extreme rapidity. The Duke imagined I was hesitating; he repeated his urgency. 'The day,' he added, 'will soon appear. It is time to determine. I am now going to awake the family, and inform them that you are living, or to take you instantly to your tomb. Speak :

Speak: will you name the author of your misfortunes and of mine?"—At this question I lifted up my eyes to Heaven, and summoning to my aid all my resolution, I answered, 'I cannot.'—'Wretch!' said the Duke, 'what is it you say?'—'No,' I resumed, 'abandon that hope: I will *never* name him.'—'Perfidious woman!' exclaimed the Duke, 'thou preferrest then thy lover to thy child, to liberty, to life, the whole world! Tremble, tremble at thy fate! The moment of vengeance is at last arrived.'—As he finished these words, he was going to seize my arm. Penetrated with fear and horror, I escaped from him. I ran to the other end of the chamber, and, flinging my arms round one of the bedposts, I kept fast hold of it. In making this effort, my night-cap came off, and my hair fell down my shoulders. The Duke, who was coming to me, stopped: he appeared surprized, and evidently struck; he gazed on me silently a moment; then forcing me from the bedpost, he brought me opposite a looking-glass: 'Unhappy woman,' said he, 'contemplate for the last time that beauty, which the most horrid darkness will soon conceal for ever. Lift up thy eyes: look at thyself! Be not more inhuman than I am. Think of thy youthful charms! Think, with pity, on the fate that awaits thee! It is yet in thy power to change it.'—I could not then refrain from casting an apprehensive and languid look at the glass. I presently closed my eyes, and felt some tears trickle down my cheeks.—'Well!' resumed the Duke, 'is your resolution yet unshaken?'—'Oh!' answered I, 'have you indeed sincerely offered me a sight of my child?'—Scarce had I uttered these words, when the Duke, in a transport of rage, caught me in his arms, and carried me out of the room. I made no resistance: In the excess of terror I was motionless and silent. After having crossed two or three rooms, he made me descend by a private stair-case, and I found myself in a spacious court, at the end of which was a door which the Duke opened. We went out, and I observed that we were in a garden. At this instant, the Duke perceiving

ceiving day appear, 'this morning,' said he, 'is the last which thy eyes will ever behold!'—I threw myself upon my knees, and raising my head to Heaven: 'O God!' I cried, 'God who knowest my innocence, wilt thou suffer me to be interred alive, and deprived for ever of the light of heaven?'—At these words, the Duke dragged me about twenty paces to a rock, and putting a key behind a large stone, a trap-door sprung open. I trembled. The Duke stopped: 'This moment,' said he, 'is still left: this is your tomb: it is yet but half open. Repent at last: convince me of your remorse by an ingenuous confession, and I am ready to pardon you. You may imagine, perhaps, that in the moment of completely gratifying my just resentment, I may dread the consequences to myself. But I have long meditated my plan; I have been attentive to every circumstance; and nothing can deter me.'—He then gave me a dreadful account of all the precautions he had taken. He told me, that he had caused a pale and livid figure of wax to be made, which he should place in my bed; and that, under pretence of discharging an act of piety, he would bury it himself, with the assistance of the old woman, who would be a witness of the interment without his being obliged to place any confidence in her.—'Once more,' added he, 'will you accept the pardon which I still deign to offer you for the last time? Speak: sacrifice your lover to my resentment: tell me his name; or for ever renounce your liberty, the world, and the light of day.'—At these words, I extended my arms towards the rising sun, as if to bid an everlasting adieu. The bright and majestic clouds with which the sky was skirted, formed a most glorious sight; the momentary contemplation of which exalted my soul, and endued me with unexpected courage. I looked with contempt upon the earth, and turning to the Duke, 'Take,' said I, with an undaunted voice, 'take your victim!'—At this instant he dragged me: my heart panted with violence; I turned my head to behold yet once more the day that I was going to abandon for ever. We descend-
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ed into a gloomy cavern, my trembling legs unable to support me. I was now dreadfully convulsed: I struggled in the arms of my cruel persecutor, and fell at his feet without sense or motion. I know not how long I remained in this condition. I was to revive, alas, only to abhor such a shocking existence. How shall I describe the extreme horror of my soul, when, in opening my eyes, I found myself alone in those vast dungeons, encircled by impenetrable darkness, and lying on some straw mats? I screamed out; and the echo repeating the dreadful sound from the inmost recesses of the cavern, it made me startle, and redoubled the terror that oppressed me! ‘Oh, God!’ I cried, ‘is this then the only voice that will answer me, the only sound I am henceforth to hear?’—At this idea I wept profusely. While I was thus indulging the violence of my grief, I heard the door of my dungeon open; and the Duke presently appeared, with a lantern in his hand. He placed by my side a pitcher of water, and some bread. ‘Here,’ said he, ‘is your food for the future: you will find it every day in the turning-box* opposite you: I shall bring, and put it there myself; and shall never more enter this frightful dungeon.’—At these words, I looked around me: I saw a spacious cavern the extent of which my eye could not reach. The part I occupied was hung with coarse straw mats, to keep it from the cold and damp:

* *Le Tour, the turning box, is a kind of machine used in nunneries; being a round press or cupboard, made to turn on a pivot, and fixed in the wall. When the open part is turned to the exterior of the wall, it receives for the nuns whatever necessaries they have occasion for; and when turned to the interior part, it likewise receives from them whatever they wish to have conveyed without; and, in either case, without their being seen. In the conclave of the Cardinals at Rome, they employ a similar machine.—By this method the unfortunate Dutches of C—— regularly received, in the sequel, not only food, but a supply of linen and clothes, whenever they became indispensably necessary.*

damp: for the barbarian who had plunged me into this horrid abode, had taken all the precautions in his power to prolong my life in it. After having observed, trembling, the dismal scene around me, I turned again to my inhuman goaler, and at last a hatred so merited, and which could no longer be concealed, burst forth at once. I reproached him with the excess of his barbarity, and expressed without reserve all the detestation with which he had inspired me. He heard me for some time with concerted rage; then, no longer able to contain himself, he flew into a most violent passion, and precipitately left me. From that day, whenever he came to bring me food, he constantly knocked at the turning-box till I answered him, and then went away without uttering a word. I soon repented of having thus, by my reproaches, increased still more, if possible, his hatred and resentment. I recollected that he was the father of my child, and that that dear child was in his power. Besides, notwithstanding the horror of my situation, Hope was not yet entirely extinguished in my bosom. The more I revolved it in my mind, the less probable it appeared, that he really intended to detain me for ever in that dreadful captivity. I even flattered myself that he had not announced my pretended death, either in the castle, or to my family; that he had found out some other method of eluding their enquiries; and that he had still reserved the possibility of making me reappear, whenever he might choose it. How could I imagine that he had imposed upon himself the painful necessity of bringing me every other day the necessaries of life; and be reduced, in consequence, to the wretched slavery of being never absent from this castle more than two or three days; since he was my only goaler, not daring to entrust the secret to a single person? Alas! I did not imagine that hatred, in order to obtain its gratification, would impose those chains upon itself, which the most ardent love could not bear without regret. These reflections persuaded me, that he would one day put a period to his vengeance; and full of this
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idea, every time he knocked at the turning-box I spoke to him; and although he did not answer me, I implored his compassion, and assured him of my innocence. As I was absolutely deprived of light, I cannot tell how many months I preserved this hope; but, at last I entirely lost it. My reason then forsook me: I accused Providence: I murmured at its decrees. My dejected soul, harrowed with grief, lost its fortitude and principles, and I sunk into the most gloomy and desponding melancholy. I had the presumption to imagine, that the excess of my misfortune gave me a right to dispose of my life; as if one were permitted to violate a sacred obligation, whenever it ceased to be agreeable. Determined to die, I was now two days without taking any nourishment, or fetching it from the turning-box. In vain the Duke knocked, and called me; I obstinately forebore to answer him. At last, he entered my prison. When he appeared, with the lantern in his hand, notwithstanding all the horror which his presence excited, I felt a secret joy, in again beholding the light: but I did not speak to him. He offered to soften the rigour of my captivity, and to give me a light, some books, and better food, if I would at last tell him the name he had so often demanded. At this proposal I looked disdainfully upon him.—‘Now,’ said I, ‘that you have broken all the fatal ties that united us, my heart is free. It now indulges, without remorse, the sentiments which once it vainly endeavoured to subdue. That object, whose name you demand, with no other view than to sacrifice him to your vengeance, is now dearer to me than ever. My last sigh shall be for him. And do you think now that I will declare him?’—‘Then,’ resumed the Duke, ‘every sentiment of religion is extinguished in your soul. You cherish in your heart an adulterous passion, and you would be guilty of suicide!’—‘Barbarian!’ interrupted I, ‘am I still your wife? Dare you assert it; you, who have plunged me into this abyss; you, who are even in mourning for me? It is true, I have no longer the fortitude to endure existence; but that

that God, who hears and observes us both, will punish you alone for the despair to which you have reduced me. In such a situation as this, if I commit a crime, you alone will be responsible for it. No living creature can see my tears and lamentations. But do you think that the deepest caverns, the thickest walls, can keep from the Omniscient Being the cries of persecuted and helpless innocence? Tremble: that dread Being observes us both! He compassionates, he will pardon me; but his avenging arm is lifted over you!"—The Duke shuddered as I spoke: he gazed at me with an air of wildness. I enjoyed for a moment the satisfaction of striking terror and remorse into a soul equally weak and cruel. Pale, thunderstruck, and agitated, with downcast eyes, for some time he stood in malignant musing and sullen silence. At last, he spoke: 'impute not to me,' said he, 'but to yourself alone, the calamity you lament. You were guilty: I have unquestionable proofs of it: you have not been able to contradict them: and yet I did not punish you till after I had repeatedly offered you pardon. I again propose to mitigate your punishment, and you refuse it. Yes, were it your pleasure, notwithstanding your infidelity, notwithstanding your aversion for me, you might still be in my palace, you might there see your child.'—'Oh, my child,' interrupted I, 'alas, is she still alive? What, what is become of her?'—'She is with your mother.'—'She is no longer then in your hands—is it really true?'—The Duke then perceiving that this idea revived me, took a letter from my mother out of his pocket, and permitted me to read it. This letter, which I bedewed with my tears, was as follows:

'My grand-daughter arrived here yesterday evening. Oh! how shall I describe all the emotions I felt while I folded her to my heart! You give her to me: she is mine. I feel that I already love her to excess. She may be able to attach me to life; but oh! I must still be inconsolable. Alas! how can I now enjoy the happiness

piness of being yet a mother, without feeling the most disquieting uneasiness? After the loss I have sustained, is there a felicity on earth on which I can depend?— I will come and see you next summer, and bring your daughter with me. We will spend two months with you. Since you cannot tear yourself from the melancholy spot which your grief so much endears to you, I will find resolution enough to come to you. I shall see the magnificent monument, which your love has erected to the memory of an object so worthy of our tears. Perhaps I shall there find the period of all my sufferings! Alas, is it impossible that a mother, without dying, can embrace the tomb of her daughter?—And yet, I *will* live—Religion commands it, and Nature herself enjoins the sacred law. I will live for the dear child you have the goodness to confide to me. Oh! how shall I ever acknowledge such an obligation, such a sacrifice? How tenderly should you love this child? She has all her mother's features; she has all her charms! My own daughter is thus restored to me in her infancy! Oh, too flattering an illusion!—Unhappy mother, thou hast no longer a daughter!—The violence of thy grief cannot deliver thee from life.'

I had scarce finished this letter, when falling upon my knees, 'O God!' I cried, 'my child is in the arms of my mother! That tender mother consents to live for my child! O God, I praise thee; thou hast wounded only me. I now bow submissive to thy will. Pardon my distracted murmurs; pour down thy blessings on all I love; and prolong my painful existence at thy pleasure.'—I now sunk again upon my straw; for I was so weak I could not support myself. The Duke seized that instant to offer me some refreshment, which I very readily took. He then left me, and from that moment I never saw him more. Yet, faithful to the vow which I had made, I now took care of my life. The idea that my prayers and resignation would draw down upon my mother and daughter all the blessings of Heaven; this dear, this consolatory idea, revived and supported

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me. The recollection of my errors became now my greatest affliction : ‘ Alas,’ said I, ‘ all my misfortunes are my own creation. I wanted confidence in my mother : I deviated from my duty, when I ceased to consult her. Ungrateful and guilty daughter ! Heaven, to punish me, blinded my parents in their choice. The husband they gave me not was formed for my felicity. And yet, but for repeated imprudence in my conduct, the sentiments of nature would at length have made me happy. But far from endeavouring to subdue a guilty passion, I fostered it in secret. I did not even hesitate to describe all its violence, in the imprudent letters that have been my ruin, and to complain at the same time of the husband I insulted.’—These reflections made me shed torrents of tears. Nevertheless, I felt something inexpressibly sweet and soothing, in weeping for my faults. I was fond, moreover, to represent them to my imagination in the strongest colours. In true contrition and sorrow there is something expiatory and healing. The remorse of guilt harrows up the soul ; but in the repentance for involuntary weakness, there is nothing painful nor severe. These virtuous sentiments console us for our faults, and reconcile us to ourselves. Bereaved of all, torn from the world, my heart, formed for love, soon devoted itself wholly to that sublime passion which could alone enable me to think life supportable. Religion taught me to know and to relish all the inexhaustible consolations which it is in her power to offer. She insensibly banished from my soul that unhappy passion, which had been the greatest misfortune of my life. In a word, she inspired what human wisdom and mere philosophy could never give, the fortitude to endure without despairing and without murmuring nine years of long captivity in a dungeon in which light could never enter.

I will acknowledge, however, that, for the first two or three years, my sufferings were so extreme, that even now the bare recollection of them makes me shudder. That time in which I supposed (from the best calculations

tions it was in my power to make) that my mother and daughter must be arrived in the same castle under which I was a prisoner; this time passed away with me in the most agonizing manner, and forms the most cruel period of my captivity. My heart was rending in this idea that my mother and daughter were near me, while I was incapable of cherishing the hope of ever seeing them again.—‘Oh, my mother,’ I cried, ‘you are lamenting my death, and I exist. And ah! what a hand have you chosen to wipe away your tears? It is in the bosom of my persecutor, of my assassin, that you shed them! Alas the tomb to which he leads you is not mine! You will trample it under your feet without knowing it! You will behold without a tear the rocks that conceal it! Perhaps, in the silence of the night, unable to taste the sweets of sleep, you will come to wander about my cavern. Perhaps, at this very moment you are sitting on that horrid trap-door, which for me, alas, will never more be opened! Ah, if it be so, you are thinking, no doubt, of your wretched daughter; you are still weeping for her; but you cannot hear plaintive cries, nor her voice which calls you!’—These ideas were distracting beyond expression: they often affected my understanding. To these cruel paroxysms of grief, succeeded a kind of stupid insensibility, the image as it were of annihilation, which was more dreadful, perhaps, than despair itself. But in proportion as piety gained the ascendancy in my heart, these violent agitations grew weaker. I found in prayer unspeakable consolation. Those awful themes, which most commonly sadden the human mind, were to me the most agreeable subjects of meditation. With what pleasure did I reflect upon the shortness of life! With what serenity anticipate the approach of death!—‘Is the happiest of human beings,’ would I say to myself, ever truly satisfied with the frail and fugitive felicity which this world affords? His mind is less intent on the blessings of the present hour than on those which he has still in expectation. Encircled by illusive scenes of happiness, his imagination is fond to wander in

futurity. But of what moment is it whether his destiny be happy or miserable? Of what moment is it, whether his wishes attain to consummation and enjoyment, or terminate in vanity and delusion? Will not new desires spring up in perpetual succession? Has he ever the wisdom to enjoy, to be contented with the present? Why then do I so bitterly deplore the blessings I have lost, since the best of them cannot confer felicity? I am, indeed, to linger out my life in this mournful gloom. My chilled imagination can behold nothing in the future but a long and melancholy light.—Well then! let me think only of my resurrection. Let me forget this transitory life, and direct all my thoughts to eternity. Let me despise these momentary sufferings, which are to be succeeded by everlasting joys; and let me henceforth devote all my desires, all my hopes, to that Being, who alone is worthy to attach and to occupy the human heart.

These salutary reflections enabled me to rise superior to my fate, and to acquiesce in it with entire resignation. Restored to reason and to myself, I not only experienced an alleviation of my sufferings, but I became accustomed to darkness and captivity. I even contrived some employments. My prison was spacious. I walked about great part of the day, or rather night. I made verses, which I repeated aloud. I had a fine voice: I was a perfect mistress of music: I composed some hymns; and one of my greatest pleasures was to sing them, and to listen to the responsive echo. My sleep became peaceful. Agreeable dreams represented to me my father, my mother, and daughter. Those dear objects seemed ever satisfied and happy. Sometimes I was transported into magnificent palaces or beautiful gardens. I again beheld the skies, the trees, the flowers. In fine, these sweet illusions restored to me all the blessings I had lost. I awoke, it is true, with a sigh; but I slept with pleasure. Even when awake, joy was no longer a stranger to my bosom: my imagination was raised into a kind of sweet enthusiasm. In the presence of the Supreme Being, I flattered myself with humble boldness, that my patience
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and resignation would not render me an unworthy object in his sight. Witness of all my actions, he deigned to hear me, to whisper to my heart, to revive it, to elevate it to himself; and I now scarcely felt a solitude in my cavern. After the privation of all the objects of my love, the only thing which I might still regret, in spite of myself, was the light and the view of the sky. I could not conceive how any one could give way to despair in the most dismal captivity, if he enjoyed a window that had a prospect of the country. At last, I was so habituated to my situation, that so far from desiring death, I more than once found, that I was still apprehensive of it. I often wanted food: the Duke sometimes brought me sufficient for three or four days: I imagined that he was then compelled to go a short journey; and when my provision was nearly exhausted, I felt some anxiety: the death of my tyrant would be mine, and that cruel idea made me utter prayers for his safety. It is true, I no longer felt an aversion for him. Religion had easily led me to renounce every sentiment of hatred. And what could this weak effort cost me? Had I not already triumphed over my passion? I pitied my persecutor: I pictured to myself the dreadful situation of his soul; his distraction, his terrors, his remorse; and I found that I was indeed severely avenged. In the beginning of my captivity, I had never heard him approach, without being ready, at the time, to faint with terror. By degrees, these violent emotions grew weaker. Some sensations, indeed, he always excited, that were not unmingled with horror. Nevertheless, I was desirous that he would come, not only for the preservation of my life, but that he thus broke the deep and frightful silence of my solitude. He made me sensible of motion and sound; in a word, he occasioned a kind of agitation, which, though it was never agreeable, was yet become necessary to me. I cannot express how very ardent and singular was my desire to hear some sound. When it thundered very much, I heard it: I cannot describe what were my sensations then: I imagined that I was less
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alone. I listened to the awful sound with eagerness and extasy; and when it entirely ceased, I sunk into the deepest melancholy and dejection. Such was nearly my situation for six or seven years. During that period, nothing ever really affected me much, but the chagrin I felt in being totally ignorant of whatever concerned my mother and daughter. In vain I questioned the Duke through the turning-box, whenever he approached it: I could not obtain one word in answer; for since his last appearance in my dungeon he had never spoken more. All my fortitude was necessary to support this cruel uncertainty, on a subject so interesting to my heart. Often, when I invoked Heaven for my mother and daughter, my heart felt a sudden oppression, and my tears flowed apace.—‘Alas!’ cried I, ‘do they still exist? I pray for their happiness, and perhaps I have the dreadful misfortune to survive them.’—At other times, I felt so forcibly the animating consolations of hope, that I did not even feel the slightest anxiety on their account. In those happy moments, I would flatter myself, that some unexpected event might yet extricate me from my prison. This idea made such an impression upon my mind, particularly during the last year of my captivity, that I made a vow to God, that if I ever recovered my liberty, I would consecrate my life to him, in a solitude remote from Rome, and would there spend the remainder of my days, as soon as my daughter should no longer have occasion for my care.—In the mean time, I was approaching the most interesting period of my life: I was approaching the happy moment of deliverance; and the Divine goodness was about to recompence me amply for nine years of suffering and grief. For some time, I imagined that the Duke constantly resided in the castle, because he regularly brought me my food. But one day he failed to come at the appointed time; I grew impatient at the delay: I had entirely finished my allowance. I slept, however, with sufficient tranquillity. The next day, I expected in vain the succour which every instant became more necessary. There was no remedy but patience:

fience : anxiety, as much as hunger and thirst, deprived me of sleep, and I remained in this situation near another day. Then, absolutely exhausted, I had no other prospect than of a speedy dissolution. I contemplated death with tranquillity ; yet the remembrance of all that was dear to me would intrude, to embitter my dying thoughts.—‘ Unhappy daughter, unhappy mother !’ I cried, ‘ in what a forlorn condition am I doomed to expire ! My dear parents ! must I then die without receiving your last blessing ? Oh ! my child, I cannot give thee mine : I cannot enjoy the sweet satisfaction of expiring in thy arms ! Thou canst not even regret me ! In the dying moments of thy wretched mother thou art enjoying, no doubt, the amusements and pleasures suitable to thy age ! Dreadful idea ! I am dying, and all that are dear to me have been reconciled to their loss ! But what am I saying, inconsiderate that I am ? I complain, I murmur, when all my miseries are just going to terminate ! Great God, forgive me this guilty weakness ! My heart rejects and disavows it. Oh ! my judge, my father, deign at last to call me to thyself. Full of hope and confidence, certain of immortal bliss, I expect death with security. I would even invoke it, did not resignation teach me to wait thy pleasure.’—As I concluded these words, I sunk down almost lifeless, on the straw that served me for a bed. I felt a serenity of soul, the sweets of which, till that moment, I had never tasted. Like a salutary balm, it seemed suddenly to heal every wound of my heart. Excessive weakness soon disordered my ideas. I imperceptibly fell into a delicious kind of sleep, during which the most ravishing scenes successively appeared to my imagination. Around my bed, I thought, were encircling angels and bright celestial forms. I heard afar harmonious voices, and more than mortal sounds. I saw heaven half-opened, and God, on a resplendent throne, extend his arms and graciously bid me approach. In reality, he was then watching over me : his paternal hand was going to break my chains. On a sudden I awoke, quite startled. I fancy I heard a

knocking at the turning box : I listen : I hear it again : my panting heart—but what surprise ! what unutterable extasy ! I hear a voice ; and that voice is no longer my tyrant's—it is new to me. It appears to me like the voice of an angel descended from heaven to deliver me. Astonished, distracted, I clasp my hands with an emotion of gratitude inexpressibly fervent : ' Oh ! God,' I cried, ' is it a deliverer whom thou sendest ? Ah ! I accepted death with joy, and thou restorest me to life !' —With these words I endeavour to rise, and hasten to the turning-box : I cannot : my strength forsakes me ; I sink again upon my bed. At this moment, my door is opened, and I perceive some light. Somebody enters. I rise. I would fain look—I can distinguish nothing : my eyes, so long deprived of light, cannot bear the glimmer of a lamp, and close in spite of me. The object still approaches : ' Who, who are you ?' I exclaim, with a faltering voice. At these words I again open my eyes, still dazzled by the light : I perceive a person on his knees before me, who putting his arm under my hand tenderly supports it, and presents me with some food. Then, almost famished with hunger, I have no longer any idea than that of satisfying this imperious appetite : every other thought, as it were, is suspended ; and I seize with eagerness the offered sustenance. At last, finding my strength revive, I turned all at once towards my deliverer. His face was in the shade : I could not distinguish his features : ' Oh ! speak,' said I, ' are you the accomplice of my persecutor, or are you come to deliver ?'—' Oh ! Heavens !' interrupted the stranger, ' what voice is this ! Where am I ?'—Then hastily rising, he fetches the light nearer, and looks at me with an earnestness mingled with compassion and horror. I fix my eyes for a moment on his face, now enlightened by the lamp. His hair seemed to stand erect : he was pale and trembling : but it was impossible to mistake him. I wish to speak : my tears almost deprive me of utterance : I can only pronounce the name of the Count of Belmire. It is he indeed. He falls at my feet : he
bedews

bedews them with tears: he looks at me again: he reproaches and he praises Heaven. The excess of his compassion gives an air of wildness and grief to what was ecstasy and joy. We each speak at once, without hearing, without answering each other. The cavern echoes with our cries. At length the Count, rising impetuously, ‘O most inhuman of men!’ cried he, ‘most execrable monster, is there a punishment at all adequate to thy crime? And you,’ continued he, assisting me to rise, ‘the unfortunate victim of a relentless tyrant’s rage, come; you are free.’—At these words, my first impulse was to spring toward the door, but instantly checking myself, ‘Ah,’ said I to the Count, ‘you are my deliverer; to you I owe my life, my liberty—but the blessings you restore—can I still regard them as such? Alas! I dare not ask—my father, my mother?’—‘They are alive.’—‘O Heavens! And my daughter?’—‘She is at Rome: she will soon be in your arms.’—‘O God,’ I cried, prostrating myself, ‘what gratitude can ever acquit the debt I owe thee? This moment only rewards me for all my sufferings—O my generous benefactor,’ I continued; addressing myself to the Count, ‘now, for your recompense, know that I am innocent. But before I relate the particulars of my melancholy history, allow me to ask you one question! Doubtless the Duke is ill?’—‘He is attacked by a mortal distemper: he cannot survive three days. Come, leave this horrible dungeon. Let the barbarian, before he expires, know that you are at liberty.’—‘No,’ interrupted I, ‘my parents only must deliver me from this prison.’—I then entreated the Count to send an express that instant to my father. He promised me that he would; and giving me a piece of paper and pencil, I immediately wrote the following note:

‘O my father, my mother; I am still alive: I am innocent. Come, and by your presence restore me really to life. Deliver me from a dreadful dungeon, and make me forget all the miseries I have endured.’

This note was scarcely legible : I was nearly a quarter of an hour in writing it ; for I no longer knew how to form a letter, and spelling I had totally forgotten. The Count, perceiving that I was absolutely determined to remain in the prison till the arrival of my mother, gave me the keys of all the doors, and left me with inexpressible regret, after having promised to dissemble with the Duke if he were yet living, and to see me again the next evening. When I found myself once more alone, I felt a terror almost as strong as that which I had formerly experienced at the beginning of my captivity. And yet I was no longer in the dark ; for the Count had left me a lamp and a dark lantern. I had also asked him for a watch, that I might count the hours ; for I did not imagine it would be possible for me to sleep one moment. Immoveable on the spot where the Count had left us, I could scarcely draw breath. I durst not lift my eyes, and yet I could not forbear, by stealth, to cast a look around me. The light, so far from cheering me, added to my terror, by giving me a full view of my gloomy and mournful habitation. At last, unable any longer to support this situation, I rose ; I took my light ; I opened my first door, and entered a kind of long gallery, where the turning-box was placed. I already felt great relief, in finding myself in a new place, and which brought me to the last door of my prison. I hurried on to the end of this gallery, and opened the door by which it was terminated. I then found myself at the foot of the stair-case of my dungeon, and being no longer enclosed but by the double door that opened into the garden, I shut that of the gallery, as if to separate myself from my frightful cavern. Then ascending the stair-case precipitately, I sat down on the last step, and at length began to breathe. One would imagine, that after an event so happy, so unexpected, I should have felt a joy most exquisitely pure. But I had suffered so long, I had been so wretched, that my heart could not at once be susceptible of those fascinating pleasures which the sweetest hopes would naturally afford.

afford. I thought, indeed, with transport, that the dear objects of my affection were still in being. But when I reflected on the inexpressible happiness I should enjoy in finding myself once more in the arms of my mother, and embracing my father and my child, I could not flatter myself that such felicity was ever to be my lot. A thousand dismal apprehensions sprung up to distress and darken my imagination; and in this state of melancholy and dejection, the most chimerical fears appeared to me so many presages of real woe. This interesting period of my life, the day when the Count of Belmire entered my prison, was the 3d of June, 17** : He left me at midnight, and till six in the morning I remained in the situation I have just described, when all at once I thought I heard some gentle sounds. I listened with the greatest attention at the door of my prison, and notwithstanding its thickness, and that of the rock which covered it, I could very distinctly hear the warbling of the birds, that were waked by the appearance of day. The emotion of joy, which I experienced at this instant, is neither to be described nor conceived. All my melancholy vanished; and my heart was again open to hope and felicity. The sweetest tears flowed from my eyes, although my ideas were still extremely confused, and I was incapable of reflecting on the unexpected change in my situation; for my attention was engrossed by the desire of hearing what was passing in the garden. With my ear close to the door, and holding my breath, I listened with an attention from which no other thought could divert me. I heard dogs barking, men walking about, and even talking indistinctly; and all these different sounds were productive of inexpressible pleasure. However, towards the close of day, I earnestly longed for night, that I might again see the Count of Belmire, and that I might question him in a thousand circumstances of which I was impatient to be informed, and which successively occurred to my imagination, in proportion as my ideas assumed a more regular form. For instance, I wished to know how long I had been confined in my prison.

prison. Before the Count appeared there, I imagined that I was near fifty years old. His youthful aspect convinced me, that grief and wearisome days are bad calculators of time ; but still I could not divine my age within four or five years. The Count returned exactly at midnight. I could easily perceive by his pale countenance, how deeply he was affected by sorrow and compassion for the event which had produced such a happy revolution for me. Respecting my situation, which obliged me to receive him alone at such an hour ; respecting the fatal tie now ready to be broken, but which still connected me ; he neither mentioned the sentiments, which in happier times I had not hesitated to avow, nor those which he still retained for me. After having informed me, that he had enclosed my note in a letter to my father, and that the Duke was at the last extremity, I begged him to acquaint me with the motives that had determined the latter to entrust him with such an important secret. He accordingly proceeded to gratify my curiosity in the following words :

‘ I had been a year on my travels when I received the news of your death. I learned at the same time, that the Duke was inconsolable for his loss. This circumstance greatly diminished my natural antipathy to him. I travelled two years more, and then, being recalled by some affairs, I returned to Italy. Obligated to see the Duke, it was necessary to repair to this castle ; for he very seldom absented himself from it, and that only to spend two or three days at Naples. Here I saw the monument erected to your memory. I beheld your picture placed in almost every apartment. I attached myself to this mansion, and even to the inhuman monster who had thus made you the victim of his fury. He discovered such violence of grief, such a deep melancholy, that soon preferring his society to every other, I came every year to spend five or six months in this castle. About a year ago the Duke was seized with an incurable distemper ; but yet, not in the least apprehending it to be so, he still continued to make some excursions to Naples

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Last winter he entirely left off going to court, and wrote to me at Rome, to desire that I would come and see him. I arrived here about the end of January, and found him rapidly declining, although he was not confined to his bed, and still continued to walk about. I even thought I could perceive, at times, that he was not entirely in his senses. A prey to remorse, life, for nine years past, has been an insupportable burthen to him, and yet he could not perceive the end of it approach without horror. At length, declining every day, he was seized at once with convulsions that obliged him to keep his bed. He remained in this condition three days, at the end of which one of his valets came to acquaint me at nine o'clock in the evening, that he wanted to speak with me. The man added, that the Duke, that night and the preceding one, had sent his servants out of the way, in order to endeavour to rise without assistance; but that being too weak to stand, he had rung for them, and they had found him out of his bed, half dressed. I went that instant into his chamber. He dismissed his physician and attendants, and informing me that he was going to entrust me with an important secret, made me swear to keep it inviolably. Then looking at me with an air of wildness. 'Family reasons,' said he, 'oblige me to confine in this castle a woman whose crimes have merited death. She must want sustenance: go, and carry her some. Knock at the turning-box, which serves for that purpose. If she does not answer you, enter her prison, and give her what is necessary. But I must previously inform you, that this woman is not in her senses. Pay no regard to what she says; but when you have given her some sustenance, return immediately. I promise to acquaint you one day with her name and history.' The Duke then disclosed to me the secrets of his caverns, and taking from under his pillow a parcel of keys, he put them into my hands, desiring me to execute this commission without delay. The barbarian, supposing that I had never seen you, thought that he could not confide in a more proper person, and thus

thus committed into my hands both your destiny and mine.'

When the Count had finished this recital, he entreated me to make him acquainted with my history. But as I could not relate it without speaking of the sentiments which I had once entertained for him, I declared that I could not comply with his request but in the presence of my father and mother. From the calculation of the Count, I expected my father to arrive in less than two days at furthest. Less agitated now, and more capable of reflection, I enjoyed, for twenty-four hours, all the happiness which so dear an expectation could inspire. My impatience then increasing, as the hour of my deliverance approached, it presently knew no bounds, and became an insupportable torment. I never felt any thing which I can compare to the violent emotions which I experienced, on the night preceding the happiest day of my life. My eyes intently fixed on the watch, I mournfully considered, at my leisure, the slow progress of its hands. Every moment I thought I heard a noise; I started; I felt my blood boil in my veins, and my poor heart palpitate with violence. These agitations grew stronger, when the singing of the birds announced the dawn of day, that happy day in which I was going to be born again, and resume the name, with all the dear and sacred claims, of daughter and of mother.—That moment formed to compensate for an age of sufferings, that moment so impatiently longed for—it approaches—it comes at last! Reiterated cries and tumultuous voices are heard. I soon distinguish a confused noise of carriages, horses, and armed men. The clamour increases—it approaches—I tremble—'O Heavens! what voice strikes my ears, and penetrates my very soul?—Oh! my mother!'—She calls her daughter!—My heart springs toward her!—'O God, who gavest me fortitude to support my misfortunes, let me not sink under this excess of joy!—I faint—I am dying—must I expire at the feet of my mother?'—At these words my door is opened: I rush out of my cavern. Notwithstanding the bright glare of day, that strikes

strikes and hurts my dazzled eyes, I see, I recollect my mother, my father. I give a violent scream; I fling myself into their arms; I faint away. Oh! who can describe the extasy of my soul when I recovered my senses? I found myself on the bosom of the dearest of mothers; my face bedewed with her tears; my father on his knees before me, pressing both my hands in his. I beheld again the day, the sun. I was soon to behold again my daughter. That instant realized all my dearest hopes, and satisfied the utmost wishes of my heart. I can give no account of my ideas in the first moments of this affecting scene. I felt too much to be able to think, or to express the violence of my joy, otherwise than by sobs and tears. At last my father, raising me in his arms, 'Come, my dear child,' said he, 'quit this dreadful abode, where Guilt has been so long the oppressor of Innocence, come.'—At these words I rose up; I looked around me; and I saw with surprise that we were surrounded by a troop of armed men, among whom I recollected many relations, and some old friends of my father's, who informed me, that having assembled them before he left Rome, he had conducted them to Naples; and that having thrown himself there at the King's feet, and shewn him my note, he had not only obtained leave to go and take me away by force, if force were necessary, but also some troops to assist him.—'When I arrived here,' continued my father, 'I was informed that your vile persecutor had just expired. This happy day then restores you to all you love, delivers you from an execrable tyrant, and secures you perfect liberty.'—All the answer I could give my father was by embracing him with tears. At the summit of felicity, and having nothing now to dread, I could not forbear pitying from my very soul the wretched Duke of C——. 'Alas!' thought I, 'if I had loved him, he might not have polluted his life by such guilty excesses; he might have lived and been happy.'—This reflection, while it excited my compassion, made it painful and melancholy, and for some moments embittered
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all my joy. At last, we set out, and the next day, the delight of the daughter was increased by that of the mother—I found again that child so passionately beloved; I folded her in my arms; I saw her shed tears; and I heard her call me her mother. I was in a kind of intoxication the two first days of my arrival at Rome, stunned with noise, astonished at every thing, and enjoying nothing truly but the happiness of seeing my daughter again, and of finding myself between my father and mother. Then, my heart being fully satisfied, I began to feel the value of all the blessings that were restored to me. I found enjoyments, equally agreeable and new, in the most common things of life: in every object I beheld a spectacle of wonder. The first time I walked out by moon light, I experienced an ineffable sensation of admiration and extasy, in beholding again that serene and beautiful splendour, with the skies all bespangled with innumerable orbs. I could not walk in the country, or in a garden, without stopping at every step, to examine minutely every object. I was never tired with contemplating the flowers, the fruits, the trees, the verdure of the fields, the closing evening, and the rising sun, that sublime, that enchanting spectacle. ‘O God,’ thought I, ‘what wonders has thy goodness created! What treasures has it lavished upon us!’

Yet wand’ring oft, with brute unconscious gaze,
Man marks not Thee!

Surrounded by such a variety of blessings, he can even think himself unhappy.’—In such meditations did my heart indulge, with transport, in all that felicity of which it had so long been deprived. I also felt inexpressible pleasure in finding myself again in the palace in which I was born, and in which I had spent the happy years of infancy and youth. But I confess that I could not again behold, without pain, the Marchioness of Venuzi, that early friend, who was the first cause of all my misfortunes. The Count of Belmire soon followed me to Rome;

Rome; and, in the presence of my father and mother, the Marchioness of Venuzi, and some of my relations, I gave him my history. I had scarcely finished, when throwing himself at my feet, he expressed, in the most passionate terms, the excess of his sensibility and gratitude. 'What!' cried he, 'you might, by naming me, have extricated yourself from that horrid destiny! it was I who plunged you in that abyss; and while you were weeping there, I beheld the day of which you were deprived for me! May I be permitted to flatter myself, that Love may still recompense you for all the miseries it has caused you to endure. Could that heart, so noble and susceptible, be otherwise than faithful? Have your misfortunes led you to discard those sentiments, without which it is impossible for me to live?'—At these words, my father affectionately embraced the Count of Belmire, and gave me to understand, by this action, how much he approved his sentiments. But for my part, having lost even the idea of a passion which had once such an ascendancy over my heart, I could not conceive how any one could be devoted to it, and still less how it were possible that I could be the object of it. After some pauses I addressed the Count, and described to him so naturally the situation of my heart, that he instantly gave up every hope. He retired from Rome for some time; but the sentiment which made him fly, soon recalled him; and consoled by the friendship which I expressed for him, he fixed his residence there entirely.

In the mean time, far from losing my relish for the happiness I enjoyed, every day seemed to make me still more sensible of its inestimable worth. How delightful were my first thoughts every time I woke! I felt the most exquisite delight in looking round, in beholding my daughter's bed by the side of mine, and in finding myself again in my paternal dwelling. I could no longer comprehend how I had been able to support the privation of that felicity which I now enjoyed, or even of the pleasures and conveniencies, which habit began to make me think absolutely necessary to life. These ideas inspired
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me with the most tender compassion for all the unfortunate. I had lain for nine years upon a bed of straw ; I had endured hunger, thirst, and cold. I owed at least to my misfortunes that sentiment which brings us nearest to the Deity. I could never hear with inattention the complaints of those poor objects who were imploring my compassion. In their fate I recollected mine ; I considered them as my fellow creatures ; and I enjoyed the most heartfelt satisfaction in soothing and relieving them. To receive, to welcome them, was not sufficient ; I thought it my duty to go in search of them. Alas ! who can have a better claim to be thus anticipated, than the suffering wretch, who often dares not ask for the slender assistance that would save his life ? This desire of finding out the unfortunate, in order to convert their tears into rejoicing, was not a virtue in me ; it was the most urgent appetite of my soul, and the sweetest of all my pleasures. But the more I became accustomed to the ease which was restored to me, the stronger was the impression which the remembrance of my captivity excited ; and it soon became impossible for me either to mention my misfortunes, or to listen with tranquillity to such histories or conversations as had any tendency to recal them to my recollection. This weakness was the source of many others. I could not bear darkness, nor absolute solitude, were it only for a moment. One night, I remember, my light went out. I awoke, and perceiving myself in utter darkness, I felt a terror which my reason could neither conquer nor diminish. I screamed out : my servants hastened to me, and found me pale, terrified, and almost senseless. These groundless terrors, this involuntary weakness, the melancholy consequences of my sufferings and captivity, were not my greatest distress. I found myself absolutely incapable of superintending the education of my daughter. I was obliged to learn again to read, write, and cast accounts ; but by a singularity remarkable enough, I had hardly forgotten the least thing of what I had read in my youth ; for not having had, for nine years, any kind of occupation, had sought for one
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in the past, by often recalling circumstantially whatever I had learned from books and conversation. Thus all those things were imprinted in my memory, better, perhaps, than if I had never quitted the world. I was twenty-seven years of age when I left my prison, and my daughter was then ten. Solely engaged with her, living quite in retirement, constantly shut up in my apartment, and seeing no one but my father, my mother, and sometimes the Count of Belmire, I passed thus five years of my life. My daughter, at last, attained her fifteenth year, and being the greatest fortune in Italy, all the families of distinction at Rome made proposa's to me. For a long time I had secretly made my choice. I consulted my daughter: she confessed that her sentiments coincided with mine; my father and mother entered into my views: and I no longer delayed their accomplishment. The Count of Belmire, still young, of a captivating figure, equally virtuous and amiable, and master of a noble fortune, had constantly refused the most advantageous and splendid alliances. It was to that too faithful lover, to that dear friend, in a word, to my deliverer, that I offered my daughter.—‘ I give her to you,’ said I, ‘ she is yours. She loves you; she is fifteen, which was my age when I first beheld you. Her person and sentiments will recal to you whatever I was then. Providence restores to you now what it deprived you of formerly; and as I was never born for your felicity, I can derive no other consolation on that account, than in seeing you happy with my daughter.’—At these words, the Count of Belmire seized one of my hands, bedewed it with his tears, and as I urged him to answer me, ‘ Ah!’ said he, at last, ‘ have you not a right to dispose of my destiny?’—The very evening that this conversation passed, the marriage articles were signed, and eight days after the Count was married to my daughter. I remained at Rome another year, and then seeing my daughter settled, and perfectly happy, I turned all my thoughts to that retirement and solitude, to which, when I was in my prison, I had vowed to devote myself. Besides, the
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air of Rome being very detrimental to my health, the physicians had ordered me to repair to Nice for some time. I undertook this journey by La Corniche; and was so delighted with the situation of Alberga, that I determined to fix my residence in this charming place. I built here a neat and convenient house, in which I took up my abode on my return from Nice. Here, for four years past, I have perfectly recovered my health, and my life glides away in the sweetest repose. Here I have written this history, which I intend for my granddaughters, when they shall be of proper age to derive benefit from it. In quitting the world I have not renounced the objects that are dear to me. Since my residence here I have made two journeys to Rome, to see my father and mother; and every year my daughter and son-in-law come to spend three months in my retreat. In a word, it is impossible to be more completely happy than I am. I praise God every day for the blessings I enjoy, and even for the miseries I have endured, since they have expiated my faults, purified my heart, and taught me the inestimable worth of the felicity that is restored to me.



T H E
SOLITARY FAMILY
O F
N O R M A N D Y.
F R O M
THE TALES OF THE CASTLE.

A FEW leagues from Forges, which is about twenty-six leagues from Paris, in the province of Normandy, and in the neighbourhood of the rich Abbey of Bobec lived Anselmo, with his wife and children, cultivating their little farm. He was far from rich; but truly happy; inasmuch that, except to church, he seldom stirred from home. He had no neighbours, and he wished for none—his peaceful habitation stood alone in the midst of a forest—and honest Anselmo, knew no higher enjoyment, than his own little family, after the fatigues of the day.

A wife and five children, a servant-maid, and an herdsman, made up his household; and three acres of land, two cows, and a little poultry were his riches.

The maid's name was Jacqueline. Bred in the house of Anselmo, she had imbibed the manners and reclusive habits of his family.—She had heard of Forges, but four leagues was a great journey; and the little church of Bobec, was a sight of as great surprise to Jacqueline, as the Colonnade of the Louvre or St. Peter's at Rome to most travellers. She never saw a book in her life but
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at church; and making good cheese and milking the cows, were her principal qualifications.

It may be easily divined, that Jacquelina's mind was not capable of any extensive knowledge; indeed had not her rulers been possessed of a competent share of humanity and patience, she would oftener than once have lost her place; yet her faults were involuntary, she meant well; and although she frequently shewed much want of memory and reflection, yet her intentions were so upright, that Anselmo and his wife could not even scold her.

Michael, the cow-keeper, was patient, peaceable, and honest, and so easy tempered, that it was impossible to make him angry. He was however, still more indolent and ignorant than Jacquelina, but the indulgent Anselmo found excuses for all his defects.

The similarity of disposition and manners between Jacquelina and Michael, their long acquaintance with each other, and total ignorance of all mankind besides, would have made it miraculous, had not an attachment to each other taken place.—The lovers were married, and in four years time were the parents of four children, whom Anselmo brought up with his own.

It has been long observed, that few people are endowed with an extraordinary qualification, but have one day or other an opportunity to exercise it: poor Michael and Jacquelina were about this time to have their patience and equanimity put to the test. Anselmo and his wife died within a short time of each other, and the relations and guardians took possession of their little heritage, and turned off the two faithful servants.

Anselmo's children had just learned to give Jacquelina the tender epithet of mother, when she was torn from their arms—and after tenderly weeping over them, she and her husband are forced to bid adieu, not to them only, but to that hospitable cottage, where they had been so long cherished, and had regarded as their paternal mansion. Luckily their feelings were not increased by those distracting inquietudes which fancy and forethought produce

produce—their sorrows were momentary.—The future was to them so obscured, that they never dreamed of what was to happen to-morrow. They had dined well before they left the cottage, and the thoughts of their supper did not distress them. With their children around them, and their worldly riches in a bundle under Michael's arm, they trudged along, regretting the death of their benefactors, and reminding one another of their former happiness. Regardless whither they went, it was not till Jacqueline, who was six months gone with child, found herself fatigued, that they observed they were bewildered in a forest. She sat down at the foot of a tree, with her husband at her side, and the children ranged themselves around.

It was the month of July, and the day fast declining, when one of the children complained of hunger, and all the rest cried for bread; Michael produced his wallet, and they made a good supper. They spent the night in the forest, and in the morning pursued their journey by a little beaten tract, which led them to a wilderness, on the outside of the forest.—There they found a stream of pure water, to the great joy of Jacqueline. But what was their ecstasy, on proceeding a little further, to find abundance of wild raspberries, mulberries, nuts, and an infinity of strawberries.

O Michael! cried Jacqueline, quite enraptured with this natural garden, let us settle and live here; here are fruits and water in abundance; and let us make a hut of the branches of these trees.—She just then recollected, and the reflection made her sorrowful, that it was necessary to obtain the permission of the owner, before she ventured to lop branches from trees. A peasant gathering strawberries at some distance, struck her eye, to him she ran and enquired if he knew to whom this place belonged.

To the Abbey of Bobec, replied the peasant.

Is the Abbey far distant?

About three quarters of a league; I go there presently with some strawberries.

Jacqueline

Jacquelina then went and consulted with Michael, who set off with the peasant for the Abbey, loaded with her instructions, and leaving her with the children at the entrance of the forest.

He arrived at the Abbey, and related his case to the Abbot, from whom he asked work, or liberty to settle and build a hut where he had left his family.

What can you do, said the Abbot ?

Keep cows.

We have no need of herdsmen ; besides, you do not belong to our district.

But I have no means of a livelihood, and that is all the same.

Alas ! we cannot relieve all the poor.

I am not poor ; I ask no alms ; our hearts are willing, and we can work.

You can do nothing ; besides I tell you, that the inhabitants of our own district must have the preference.

But I am very weak and sickly, I assure you, and so you ought to take me into your service.

What, because you are incapable of working ?

Yes to be sure ; it was for that reason that my dead master Anselmo took me into his service, and would never turn me away ; but if you do not like sickly people, at least, Mr. Abbot, give us leave to build a little hut with boughs, upon the heath.

How will you live there ?

With wild fruits and roots ; there are watercresses, strawberries, nuts, and water.—Truly it is a paradise.

What will you do in winter ?

Winter !—We never thought of winter ; but winter will not be here so soon, this is only July.

Hark you, good man, since you are so very desirous of it, I permit you to build your hut ; and, moreover, I authorize you to come every other day to the Abbey, for a supply of bread and potatoes for you and your family.

I have a wallet.

Go, that is all that I can do for you.

Oh !

Oh! that is more than I asked—Jacquelina will be so happy!

Away run Michael, and had got to a good distance ere the Abbot's servants overtook him, and brought him back by their Master's orders to give him brown bread and roasted potatoes—Honest Michael, at first refused them, as the Abbot said they were only to come every other day, so, says he, I will come for them the day after to-morrow.

In spite of his resistance, however, they filled his pockets and hands with the provisions destined for two days, and he departed, highly satisfied with the success of his journey. He found Jacquelina, came up to her with a triumphant air, and answered all her questions. Jacquelina, though quite happy at the recital, scolded him a little notwithstanding, for not having bought an axe, in the village of Bôbec, to cut down the branches; for, said she, here we have seven shillings and elevenpence, (it was the fruit of ten years savings) and what are we to do with all that money?

That is true, replied Michael, but one cannot think of every thing; we had forgot, you know, that winter would come.

Oh! now you mention winter, you must keep the money to buy sheeps skins, that we may lie comfortably.

Ay, so I will; we will have every thing comfortable I warrant, since we are to live here.

Come, let us go to work, we can cut the small branches with our knives.

Jacquelina went towards the wood, her husband followed, and they worked till night. The husband and the wife were neither of them robust or active, for which reason they were a fortnight in constructing their hut; which was tolerably solid, it is true, but which had one inconvenience unperceived by them, till their work was almost finished. They had forgot; for, as Michael said, they could not think of every thing, that they were to live in the hut, and that consequently it was necessary it

should be as high as themselves. It is easier to work within your reach, than to clamber and raise your arms above your head, and they did what would give them the least trouble.

Jacquelina and Michael could lean upon their hut, as you would lean upon a balcony. Jacquelina was the first who remarked this defect of construction, and though the building was far advanced, had so much fortitude as to be tempted to begin the work again, had not Michael persuaded her to the contrary; for, said he, people do not want a house, except to rest in, and we can either sit or lie down in ours.

Jacquelina had nothing to answer to this reasoning, and notwithstanding its erroneous dimensions, the hut was finished.

The day on which they dined in it, for the first time, was a holiday: Michael had been, in the morning, to the Abbey, whence he had brought potatoes and fresh bread, and likewise a pint of milk and some eggs, which he had purchased in the village. The joy of the children was excessive at the sight of this delicious feast, and their gaiety excited that of Michael and Jacquelina, so that nothing was wanting to the happiness of the banquet, for the guests had good appetites and good humour; when night came, sound sleep and tranquillity came also. After having passed above eight-and-twenty nights exposed to the injuries of the open air, they found an inexpressible satisfaction in laying themselves down beneath a thick foliage, and on fresh straw; in the morning they awaked in the most perfect health.

There is nothing so comfortable, said Michael, as to have every thing at one's ease. They may well say, that use makes all things easy; yet I should never have slept so well upon the ground, and with the skies for a covering.

Indeed, nor I, replied Jacquelina; for I could not avoid thinking of the comfortable stable, where we lay when our old dear master lived.

But, Jacquelina, our hut is as good as the stable.

Oh,

Oh, yes; and as our good master was wont to say, let us be happy at home, now we have a house.

Michael had the evening before laid out his seven shillings and eleven pence, thus—Some warm sheep skins to sleep on, flax and distaff for Jacquelina to spin with—with a platter and five wooden spoons—and he employed himself in catching birds with lime, which he took with him, and once a month, carried Jacquelina's work to sell, which did not amount to much, for, as was said, she was neither remarkable for activity nor industry.

Summer glided away, and in September Jacquelina was delivered of a little daughter—Winter arrived, and they found it far from comfortable; even the sheep skins did not keep them warm, and there were no fruits to gather, yet they stood it surprisingly—They had never slept in a chamber with fire.—That stable, they remembered with so much gratitude, was open in many places, so that the difference betwixt it and their hut, was not very great even in winter, and in summer the latter was vastly preferable, built on a healthy soil, sheltered by a spacious forest, and abounding with all manner of fruits and flowers—while the stable stood in a yard, encompassed with dung, and in its center, a pond of stagnant filthy water.

Towards the end of winter Michael, who, for the last two months could hardly walk as far as the Abbey, at last found it impossible to go thither and receive their subsistence. Jacquelina therefore went in his stead, and poor Michael was obliged to stay in his hut, gloomily extended on dry leaves. He did not suffer any great pain; and his natural piety and tranquillity preserved him from lassitude and impatience: he prayed to God all the day, and Jacquelina spun and told her beads by his side: his children continually came to care for him, so that he could not absolutely be called miserable; and a year passed away in this manner.

Michael and Jacquelina had lived two years in their hut, when one day (it was the month of July) Jacquelina,

who had been gathering fruits round the forest, came running, quite out of breath. Oh Michael cried she, you cannot think what a fine thing I have just seen!

Ay, what?

Oh dear! a coach without a top; it is made for all the world like a cart; but then it is all yellow, and shines so——besides it is drawn by six horses, all over silver——and there are such fine ladies in the coach, and such fine gentlemen behind, with coats as red as our Billy's cheeks——And——

Jacquelina heard the noise of the landau which she had been describing; her heart beat with joy, she ran from her hut, and all her little ones followed her. The landau was not thirty paces from her; in it, superior to all the rest, was one angelic lady, who, looking at her and her children with gentle smiles, ordered the coachmen to stop.

Jacquelina, surprised and astonished, durst not advance, whilst the young and beauteous stranger, followed by four ladies, who alighted with her from the carriage, approached.——Are these five children all yours? said she.

Yes, my lady,

Poor little creatures! Why they are almost naked.

Oh! the three youngest have jackets, but we keep them against winter.

And do you live all day in this hut?

Yes, my lady, and all night too.

What, have you no other dwelling?

No, my lady; we have not had for these two years past. We live very well in the summer; but to be sure it is a little cold in the winter: especially since my husband has been ill.

Your husband ill! and lying in that hut!

Yes, my lady.

Merciful providence!——How happy am I we have lost our way, and that chance has conducted us hither.

The angelic stranger went towards the hut, and with her attendants endeavoured to enter; but their high heels

heeled shoes, and their hats and feathers, obliged them to stoop so much, that the stranger, unable to support the pain of such an attitude, kneeled down in the hut.— Good God ! said she, turning her tearful eyes on Michael, and have you had no other asylum than this for two years ? — Could you find no relief at Forges ?

Forges is so far off, my lady !

It is but three leagues.

My husband has been sickly this year and a half, and I could not leave him to undertake so long a journey ; besides we have wanted for nothing, they have always given us bread and potatoes at the Abbey.

The stranger took out her purse : Take these, said she to Jacquelina. I will send for you this evening ; but since you love this place so much, I promise you shall return again. I only desire you to pass some time at Forges, for your husband wants the assistance of a physician.

While the stranger was speaking, Jacquelina was considering the pieces of gold the stranger had given her.— Since you are so very good, my lady, said she, I must make bold to tell you, that these pieces you have given me will do us no good ; they do not know what they are in this country.

What, have you never seen gold ?

Oh yes, my lady, to be sure I have seen the gilding in the church at Bobec ; but as for golden money I never heard speak of any such thing, and I am sure nobody will take it.

The stranger, struck by an excess of poverty, of which she had never before had an idea, could not retain her tears ; she prevailed, however, on Jacquelina to keep the gold she had received ; but for her better satisfaction she gave her some crown pieces, which were received with gratitude and joy. After which, she and her attendants left the hut, remounted their carriage, and returned to Forges, leaving Michael and Jacquelina astonished and transported.

They talked of nothing but the beautiful lady; and their conversation was still on the same subject, when the messengers arrived to take them to Forges. Four men carefully placed Michael on a kind of bier, on which he was carried lying on a mattress. Jacquelina and her children were seated in a covered cart; and our little troop arrived at Forges about nine o'clock in the evening.

They were conducted to a house, where they found clean linen and good beds. As soon as Michael was put to bed, Jacquelina ran to interrogate her hostess, and in less than half an hour returned.—Oh Michael, said she, thou wilt be so surprised!—That beauteous lady—Dost thou know what a Princess is?

No, truly.

Well, that fine lady is a Princess!—And moreover she is called a Duchess—and besides all which, she has another name still—But that I have forgot; however, what is most of all, she is—Ay, she is a relation to the King!

How can that be? She has no pride!

No more she has, as thou sayest.

How can a relation of the King's have such mildness in her looks, and such gentleness in her words?

Thou wilt never guess what she is come to Forges for!—It is to drink of a certain water here that makes women have children; for my share, I have no opinion about any such water; but I will say my prayers once a day the oftener for her, that God may give this dear good lady as many children as her heart could wish, that so she may be happy.

Their conversation was interrupted by the hostess, who brought them an excellent supper. Michael and his wife had before this time drank bad cyder, but never any sort of wine, and, for the first time in their lives, they tasted it to the health of their benefactress. After which Jacquelina went to bed, thanking God, and pouring forth a thousand blessings on her young and virtuous Protectress.

On

On the morrow Jacquelina was awakened by a woman, who came to tell her, the Princess had ordered her to take measure of her and her children, and make shifts and clothes for all the family. Accordingly some days after Jacquelina received all kinds of necessaries; shoes, stockings, caps, nothing was forgotten.

Jacquelina's joy was so much the greater, for that her husband's health was presently re-established. The assiduous care of the Physician, a healthy lodging, and good food, soon produced a surprising alteration, and in three weeks time he was able to rise and walk about his chamber.

At this epocha, Jacquelina had an interview with her benefactress, who presented her with a bunch of keys. There, said she, are the keys of your house, your closets, and your cupboards; return home, my good Jacquelina, and to-morrow morning I will come and breakfast with you. Jacquelina, astonished at what she heard, stuttered a few words, and received the keys with a stupid air, thinking it impossible that she could have a house with cupboards and closets, or that a relation of the King's could come to breakfast with her.

The same day Michael, his wife, and children were re-conducted to the wilderness, where they had been originally found; but what was their amazement, when they saw, instead of their former rude hut, a well-built little house, situated in the midst of a large garden. The children ran and danced with joy, and Michael and Jacquelina kissed and wept over them—Oh! my God, said Jacquelina, clasping her hands, what have we done to deserve all this happiness?

They entered their habitation, and found it composed of two good rooms, with a pile of wood at the end, and a little kitchen, well furnished with household utensils: there was a chimney in the bedchamber and for furniture they had two good beds with strong curtains, two wooden tables, four rush-bottomed chairs, two armed chairs, and a large press.

Jacquelina took her bunch of keys, opened her press, and there found two complete suits of clothes for her husband, and the same for herself and children; there were shifts, stockings, bonnets, and, moreover, sheets and towels, and a large quantity of flax to spin.

As soon as she had taken an inventory of her press, Jacquelina was brought into her garden, already well supplied with vegetables, and afterwards shewn a hen-roost, where were a score of fowls. At last her Conductor opened the door of an out-house, in which were two milch cows, and informed her she was the owner of a small meadow, about a quarter of a mile from the house. Jacquelina thought herself in a dream. What, said she to her husband, are we richer than our dear good master Anselmo was? Why his cottage was but a stable, when compared to this—Our garden too is twice as large—O Michael! we must never forget our hut, especially in the winter, when with our children we shall sit round our fire; for we ought always to thank God as sincerely as we do at present.

While she spoke thus, tears of joy dropt from her eyes; Michael also wept, and both kissed their children, who received their caresses with a pleasure they had never felt before, though they had been always tenderly beloved.

Jacquelina could not close her eyes all night; she had a lamp upon the chimney-piece, and she passed the hours in contemplating, with admiration, her chamber and her goods, and praying God to bless her illustrious benefactress. At break of day she rose, and so did Michael, and the happy couple again went to visit their kitchen, their garden, their hen-roost and their cow-house. They afterwards dressed their children, put on their best clothes, and prepared breakfast; the table was spread with a napkin quite new, and furnished with two large pans of cream, brown bread, fresh butter, and a basket of nuts just gathered. after which they waited for their dear good lady, with equal anxiety and impatience.

At

At eleven o'clock the eldest son, who stood centinel at the wood-side, quitted his post, and came running to announce the first sight of the landau. Michael and Jacquelina, with beating hearts, each took the child by the hand; and Michael, who was yet far from being strong, was sorry that he could not run faster. The children soon outstript them, and ran tumultuously towards the carriage, while their father and mother in vain called to them to keep back.

Scarcely had Jacquelina and Michael got out of their yard-gate, before the young Princess had alighted. They threw themselves at her feet, bathed in tears; and Jacquelina, pointing to her husband, with a faltering voice, said, Look, my dearest lady, look, he is quite well—He can run. Here too are our children, they will not complain of cold; and here is our house, where we shall be as happy in winter as in summer.—This is all your doing, and a righteous God only can reward you. As for us, alas! we do not know how to thank you.

A deluge of tears interrupted her speech, while the charming and virtuous Princess wept in company, raised Jacquelina, took hold of her arm, and entered the house. You may well suppose the breakfast was thought excellent; that they walked afterwards in the garden, and that Michael and Jacquelina pointed out all their acquisitions and all their wealth.

The Princess departed at one o'clock, and soon arrived at Forges; where she learnt with pleasure and emotion, that there is no condition, no class, in which the same generous and sublime sentiments may not be found, as those by which she was so nobly distinguished. The masons, who had built the house in the wilderness, affected by an action which thus made a whole family happy, were desirous, as much as in them lay, of participating; they worked day and night at the building, and as soon as it was finished, unanimously refused to accept the money offered in payment. It was impossible to

make them receive the least recompense ; and there was no other way of rewarding, but by immediately employing them about other jobs, for which they were paid double the sum they asked.

THE
HISTORY
OF
SAINT ANDRE.
FROM
ADELA AND THEODORE.

THE father of our venerable guide, was called Monsieur de Vilmore. He was a man of mean extraction; but, in a few years, had amassed a prodigious fortune. He had several children, of whom our good St. Andre was the youngest. M. de Vilmore aspired to the honour of marrying his daughters into some noble families, in order to give distinction to his own by the splendour of his alliances; and being desirous, moreover, to leave his eldest son in the possession of a vast estate and of exalted rank, he scrupled not to sacrifice the young St. Andre to these ambitious views. He sent this proscribed son to a distant and mean boarding school, where his education was quite neglected; but, having naturally a fine genius and excellent understanding, the youth soon surpassed the expectations of his masters. When he arrived at his sixteenth year, he was informed that the church was the only choice he had to make. A lively imagination, powerful passions, and his knowledge of the affluent circumstances of his family, all inspired him with an insurmountable aversion for that profession. Desirous of diverting his father from a resolution which was so fatal to his peace, he requested leave to return home,

home, that he might open his mind to him. M. de Vilmore, as he had no suspicion of these views, had no objection to grant him this favour; and consequently, after a kind of exile ever since he was five years old, he revisited his father and his family for the first time, at the age of sixteen. He arrived at his father's house on the very day when one of his sisters was married to the Marquis de C****. In the scenes of opulence and grandeur which he now beheld, he saw his brother and sisters treat him as a stranger, and even his father behave to him with indifference and contempt.—From such a welcome he soon divined what misfortunes were to await him. He persisted, however, in communicating his sentiments to his father, to whom he addressed himself with equal firmness and respect: ‘I do not ask, Sir,’ said he, ‘for affluence: a moderate competency will content me; but do not deprive me of my liberty, nor compel me to enter into a state to which I have an invincible aversion.’—— M. de Vilmore, enraged at this unexpected opposition, loaded the generous youth with the most severe reproaches; ‘Your obstinacy,’ said he, ‘will ruin you. But my kindness induces me to give you yet some time for reflection. I will send you to one of your aunts in Flanders, where you shall remain six months; and if, at the expiration of that time, you do not submit to my pleasure, I shall employ the most forcible means to make you sensible of your duty.’

The unfortunate St. Andre set out for Lisle overwhelmed with the deepest affliction, but unshaken in his resolution. A captivating person, an amiable character, and a certain sweetness and dignity in his manners, attracted universal notice in an exile, the severity of which was softened by the pleasures of society. Of an easy temper, and perfectly inexperienced, he knew not how to resist the solicitations of a variety of new friends, by whom his company was perpetually courted. The regiment of ***** was then at Lisle: the officers played very high; and knowing the vast riches of M. de

de Vilmore, they frequently engaged him as one in their dangerous parties. He began, as is most commonly the case, by winning; and he ended, which is still more inevitable, by losing. The hope of recovering his money plunged him into deeper play, till, at last, his honour was engaged for 24,000 francs*. In this extremity he wrote to his father, and confessed his folly in the most pathetic terms. He received no answer; but he was arrested, and confined in the castle of Saumur. To this punishment he submitted with a resignation, which no one could have expected from a temper that was naturally violent. Knowing that all his debts were paid, he felt sentiments of gratitude, that enabled him to endure patiently a treatment, which he had no reason to imagine would be of long duration. But he had yet no idea of the inexorable cruelty of his father. Contrary to his expectations, he was detained a prisoner two years. At length, the doors of his prison were opened, and he heard this sentence announced: 'You must either give your word of honour to enter into holy orders, or go out a cadet to the East-Indies.'—'I do not hesitate a moment,' answered St. Andre; 'I shall rejoice to leave a country, which is now a foreign one to me, since it no longer contains either a father, a relation, or a friend.'—This answer determined his fate: he was sent to Brest, where he embarked two days after. Thus did an unnatural father send beyond the seas a youth of eighteen, of the most promising expectation, without money, without connections, and without rank; and with the hope, perhaps, that, surrounded by perils, and overwhelmed by misery and grief, he might there terminate his unfortunate life.

A fine constitution, however, enabled him to support the most severe fatigues; while fortitude and bravery rendered him superior to misfortune. He distinguished himself greatly; he rose to preferment; and soon emerged from poverty and obscurity. These early successes were productive of others more advantageous still. Having acquired reputation and friends, he was associated

in

* 1050*l.* sterling.

in several enterprises, which, in a country at that time so fertile in resources, in less than five years secured him a happy and independent situation. Content with a moderate fortune, in the acquisition of which he had not once deviated from virtue; and having risen to an honourable post in the service of the Company; he now began to turn his thoughts towards his native country. Still young, his heart was not insensible to the desire which vanity inspired, of displaying before his family the rapid produce of his services; with a resolution, however, of returning to the East Indies, although not as the slave of necessity, but as ardently aspiring still to superior honours. His father, informed of his good fortune, had condescended for two years past to acknowledge him as his son. He even wrote to him, and appeared to have got the better, at last, of all his former prejudices. St. André embarked, with his whole fortune in paper. A truce, concluded between the two rival Companies for a year, seemed to promise that security in his voyage, which could not permit him to defer it. This imprudence was the source of all his subsequent misfortunes. He was scarcely at sea, when the truce was broken; his ship was attacked by the English, and he was conveyed a prisoner to Falmouth, a port town on the southern coast of England. He lost, at once, his liberty and fortune; and all his flattering prospects instantly vanished. He wrote to his father; but to augment his calamity, the only answer he received, was full of the most bitter reproaches.

At the expiration of six months he was released from confinement. He embarked at Falmouth, and soon beheld his native shore, but with emotions far different from those he had fondly hoped to experience; and he arrived at Brest, nearly in the same situation in which he had left it six years before. Without money, without the common necessaries of life, and without resources, he recollected a surgeon, named Bertrand, at whose house he had formerly lodged, and from whom he had received many proofs of friendship. He soon found
this

this worthy man, who offered him his house, his purse, and all the services in his power. St. André did not blush to be indebted to the kind offices of friendship. He wrote to his father; and, having never received his portion, which in happier times he had even forgotten, he now found himself obliged to demand it. M. de Vilmore answered, that he would give him no money, but on condition that he would immediately embark again for the East-Indies, in a ship that was just ready to sail. This unexampled severity now entirely alienated a heart, which had long before been sufficiently exasperated. In the anguish of resentment and despair, his fortitude forsook him. He fell dangerously ill, and was soon reduced to the last extremity. Bertrand left him neither night nor day; but was lavish in all the attentions of tenderness, which the most generous friendship could inspire. This good man had a daughter about eighteen, who, imagining that she only obeyed the dictates of virtuous compassion, was constantly at the bed-side of the unfortunate St. André, and joined with her father in the employment of a nurse. Bertrand related to her the adventures of his unhappy patient, with his great prosperity in the East-Indies; he extolled his courage, perseverance, and good conduct, of which there were many witnesses then at Brest; and they both bewail a fate that was so calamitous and unmerited. St. André, who, from the commencement of his illness, had been delirious, was not in a situation to enjoy this affecting goodness; and having been before oppressed with the unutterable anguish of grief, he had so constantly kept in his chamber, that he had hardly even seen Blanche, (which was the name of Bertrand's daughter) nor had he ever taken any notice of her. But this young woman, notwithstanding her father was in very humble circumstances, was celebrated in Brest for an education superior to her birth, for the beauty of her person, and the inexpressible modesty and sweetness of her deportment.

One night, when St. André was given over, Blanche,
seated

seated sorrowfully on the bed-side, was observing with deeper attention and compassion the unhappy object of so much care and anxiety. The paleness of death overspread his features; but the traces of youth were still visible, and rendered them more afflicting. His closed eyes seemed closed for ever: one of his hands were extended on the bed. Blanche, with an irresistible impulse, dropped one of her hands on his, and finding it cold and lifeless, she thought him dead.—‘O Heaven!’ she exclaimed, ‘it is all over! unfortunate young man!’—Terror, compassion, a softer emotion still, now deprived her of all utterance, and she sunk down on the bed, without sense or motion. At this instant, St. Andre opens his eyes, and the first object that strikes him is Blanche near him in a swoon—it is youth and beauty surrounded by the shades of death. He utters a piercing cry; assistance arrives; and Blanche is recovered. This affecting scene is explained; and St. Andre revives, only to feel all the emotions of the most passionate gratitude. Thus, in the midst of painful horrors, and on the borders of the grave, did Love unite for ever two unfortunate hearts.

St. Andre, who soon began to be sensible of his gradual recovery, yielded to the dangerous impression of a passion, that for the first time he now experienced. He soon obtained the confession on which his happiness depended. Blanche had betrayed herself even before she was beloved; and now, happy and tranquil, confirmed by transport of joy what her despair had already declared. Bertrand himself, impelled by pity, tenderness, and perhaps ambition, consented, after a faint resistance, to the united entreaties of St. Andre and his daughter. He approved of the idea of a secret union; and St. Andre, six months after his illness, being then twenty-five, married Blanche, and attained the height of his wishes. Neither desiring nor expecting any assistance from his father, he resolved to conceal his marriage, and to take the first favourable opportunity of returning to the East-Indies, accompanied by his wife and her father. He took

took the necessary measures; and, by the assistance of his reputation and his friends, soon saw the possibility of being employed in an advantageous manner. In the mean time Blanche became pregnant. This induced him to urge his solicitations with more earnestness, in the hope of being able to set sail, and to arrive in India before his wife could be delivered. But unexpected delays occurring, he perceived, at last, that it would be impossible to avoid the fatal discovery that must render his secret public. Indeed, it began now to be no longer a mystery in the town. He therefore took the resolution to communicate it himself to his father; which he did in the following letter:

‘ Sir,

‘ Can you recollect the name and existence of an unfortunate man, who has been so long forgotten? I ought to suppose, that you have for ever renounced that right over my destiny which nature gave you. I know what were my early errors. If my youth could not then render them excusable in your eyes, I have sometimes flattered myself since, that an exile of six years, spent in useful and (I may presume to add) glorious labours, may have induced you to forget them. Nevertheless, cruelly forsaken in my last misfortunes, I have found in a stranger only the compassion, assistance, and tenderness of a father. Without renouncing him who has rejected me, I have thought myself at liberty to adopt him, whose virtue and beneficence render him worthy of such a sacred title. The father I have chosen is in obscure and needy circumstances; he is neither distinguished by family nor fortune, but he is virtuous and sensible. By accepting his favour, by entering into his family, and marrying his daughter, I am become his son; and the happiness he has conferred on me, far exceeds, as a compensation, all the misery I have endured. I have a due respect for the distinctions established in society; and had I been of a rank that such an alliance would have dishonoured, I should have had the resolution to sacrifice

sacrifice my passion, and with it the whole happiness of my life, to the honour of my family. But I thank God, no such obstacle existed. My wife's birth is equal to my own; and her fortune is not inferior to mine. Her father, indeed, is poor, and mine is rich: which constitutes all the difference between us. No reason, therefore, could or ought to have diverted me from this step. Bound by a tie, which Love and Honour render equally dear and sacred, I entreat you to believe, that ambition, authority, and even the laws themselves, would be armed in vain to dissolve it. I am going to the East-Indies, to begin a new career. I conjure you not to trouble my destiny, by clamours which cannot change it. I desire only peace, and that I may totally forget a country, which I abandon perhaps for ever. This is the only favour I can presume to implore; I hope—I expect it from your justice.'

'I have the honour to be, &c.'

This letter excited the most terrible emotions in the breast of M. de Vilmore. His vanity was too deeply hurt, not to raise the utmost fury of indignation. The comparison between his family and that of Bertrand appeared to him the height of insult. He instantly procured two letters de cachet. St. Andre was torn from the arms of his distracted wife: he was hurried, loaded with irons, into a dungeon; and Blanche, notwithstanding her youth and condition, met with a similar fate. In her prison, this unhappy woman brought into the world the unfortunate fruit of her love for St. Andre. They would have robbed her of her infant; but her resistance, her lamentations, and her tears, were powerful enough to melt the savage bosoms, that now for the first time, were sensible to pity. They permitted her child to remain, and, that she might preserve his life, she was careful of her own. In the mean time, St. Andre, driven to desperation, raving and furious, invoked vengeance, and demanded Blanche or death. Three months were passed in this dreadful situation. At length, he was informed, that a person was arrived, with a message to him
from

from his father.—‘My father!’ he exclaimed, ‘I have no father!’—At this instant, he beheld a person, whom he knew to be a steward of M. de Vilmore. ‘Ah!’ cried St. Andre, ‘has the barbarian, who sent you, at last heard my prayers? Are you the messenger of death? That is the only favour I can expect from him.’—‘Compose yourself, Sir,’ answered the steward, ‘compose yourself. I come to announce to you that good fortune to which you could have no reason to aspire. While you were accusing Fortune she was active in your favour. Your brother is dead, and you are become the natural heir of a father, who is still disposed to pardon you, and to receive you with open arms.’—‘What!’ interrupted St. Andre, ‘is my brother dead! Heaven is just: it has torn from my persecutor the object which his pride rendered so dear to him; and I, the victim of his cruel ambition, have not in vain called for vengeance.’—‘Hear me,’ resumed the steward: ‘instead of invective, endeavour rather, by penitence, to merit this returning goodness. M. de Vilmore, has been the creator of his own fortune, and can dispose of it as he pleases. He has two daughters, whom he can enrich at your expense. But having no grandchild of his name, and pitying your errors and misfortunes, he invites you to that succession from which death has just snatched your brother. But you must imagine what an absolute submission is requisite to purchase this paternal bounty.’—‘Speak, Sir,’ coldly replied St. Andre; ‘a father, who would at length acknowledge me, who calls for my hand to wipe away his tears, is certainly incapable of requiring any disgraceful conditions. Speak, therefore; I listen to you, without fearing such.’—‘You must then,’ replied the steward, ‘for ever renounce a degrading as well as illegal marriage. A decent situation in life shall compensate Blanche for the distressing consequences of your mutual imprudence. Your consent alone is wanting to dissolve this shameful connection: every other step is already taken; in a word, it is on these terms only that you can aspire’—‘Enough,’ interrupted St. Andre, ‘I fore-
saw

saw this detestable proposal from the beginning. I have had the patience to hear you ; and now, in your turn, observe my answer. I may be persecuted and oppressed ; my wife and child may be torn from me ; and I may be deprived of life itself : all these cruelties may be inflicted by tyranny armed with power : but honour is a jewel they can never tear from me : I will ever preserve it pure and unspotted : and I shall be happy to suffer all for the dear objects of my esteem and love. This is my final and irrevocable resolution. Neither violence, nor tortures, nor the dreadful apparatus of death ; nothing in the universe shall ever compel me to change it.'—The steward would have replied ; but St. André refusing to hear another word, he retired, with the shame and regret of having in vain endeavoured to seduce an incorruptible man. Blanche, in her person, experiences a persecution still more odious and unjust. They importune her to renounce her rights, and her title of wife of St. André. They propose, on these terms, an advantageous settlement for herself and child. Entreaties and menaces are employed by turns. Her invariable answer was, that she expected from her husband the example she ought to imitate. She hoped for an example that would evince his courage and fidelity ; and she added, that, in every thing, she was determined her conduct should be conformable to his.—M. de Vilmore, despairing to vanquish such inflexible resistance, abandoned himself to all the outrages, which pride and resentment could excite in the most cruel and obdurate mind. From the weeping mother's arms they tore that dear child, the only support, the only consolation of her life. The unhappy pair were loaded with heavier chains. Their imprisonment was rendered more cruel and more dreadful still ; and, to heighten this barbarity, they were informed, that such was the treatment they were ever to expect. Four years elapsed in this horrible situation. St. André, however, supported by Love, made it his duty to live and suffer for the dear objects that were torn from him. By indefatigable pains and perseverance, he at last succeeded,

succeeded, in some measure, in influencing one of his goalers; who, although he could not be prevailed upon to connive at his escape, procured him the consolation of pens, ink, and paper. He then drew up a memorial, in which he wrote a very circumstantial History of his Life. This he concluded, by declaring, that he demanded no other favour than his liberty, his wife, and child; and that he had no pretensions whatever to his father's fortune, nor even to his own legal portion. This memorial was inscribed with these words: *To my Country.* It began thus: 'I have shed my blood for my country. I am an obscure citizen, but innocent and persecuted. My cause is the cause of every virtuous and feeling heart. Loaded with chains, forlorn and dying in an infamous dungeon; as a father, husband, and son equally unfortunate; I throw myself on the virtue and magnanimity of the first of my countrymen, into whose hands this memorial may fall; and I conjure him to have the generous compassion, to exert himself in the protection and defence of an unfortunate man, who, for near five years has been enchained by violence and oppression. May a beneficent and virtuous hand lay this memorial at the foot of that august Tribunal, which is the protector of injured innocence; and may I, one day, in embracing my wife and son, forget for ever, in their arms, all the torments I have suffered.'

The man, whom St. Andre had gained, caused this memorial to be secretly printed; and many copies of it were soon dispersed. A Counsellor, celebrated for great talents and public virtue, was deeply affected by the perusal of this History; and he was nobly ambitious of the glory of supporting such a singular and interesting cause. In spite of the influence and opposition of M. de Vilmore, he soon made the courts of law resound with the cries of the unfortunate St. Andre. He enquired after the fate of Bertrand; and he found that grief had put a period to his days about six months before. Those who detained the young son of St. Andre were compelled to deliver him into his hands; and he obtained

obtained an order for the immediate enlargement of the unhappy pair. He then repaired to the prison where Blanche was confined: she was quite ignorant of the measures he had taken; and in the agonies of despair, she expected from death alone the period of all her woes. The generous Counsellor, led by humanity, entered this dreary abode, where youth, beauty, and virtue, in distress, presented a most affecting picture. He held St. Andre's child in his arms; and, by the gloomy light of a lamp, he saw Blanche lying upon straw, in a horrid dungeon; her hair dishevelled! with no other covering than rags; her face drowned in tears; and her hands, loaded with chains, lifted up to Heaven. He stopped; and, with a pity mingled with admiration, contemplates her youth, her beauty, and the horrors that surround her. Blanche, imagining him to be the goaler, lifts up her languid head, and with a faint and dying voice, demands what was intended.—‘I am come,’ cries the Counsellor, ‘to pay my homage to suffering Virtue, and to terminate its sorrows.’—He then prostrates himself at her feet, and presents her child to her. Blanche recollecting him, exclaims, ‘Ah! if he be restored to me, life is yet supportable!’—She would embrace this dear child, but the effort is too much. The excess of joy, the transports of her soul, with the weakness to which she is reduced, exhaust her little remaining strength, and she faints in the arms of her deliverer. Who can express the emotions of surprise and ecstasy in this virtuous and feeling heart, when, on recovering her senses, she is informed, that she is now going to see her husband; that liberty is restored to both; and that the beneficence of an utter stranger would reunite them for ever? ‘Come,’ said the Counsellor, ‘leave this dreadful place, that has too long witnessed the lamentations of innocence. Come, that I may restore to the arms of a father and a husband two objects so dear to his heart. But,’ continued he, ‘you cannot depart in this unworthy dress; I have foreseen every thing. In this bundle you will find whatever is necessary. Dress yourself; while I go to the goaler, to shew him my order,

der, and, in a quarter of an hour, I will return to you.'—He left her, without waiting for an answer; and Blanche, opening the bundle, finds linen, and a complete dress, in which nothing had been forgotten. She bedews with her tears these precious pledges of a goodness at once so delicate and considerate; and her soul, now open once more to happiness, is overcome with the unutterable sensations of grateful joy.

The Counsellor returns; not less delighted nor less affected than Blanche. He presents to her a trembling hand; he assists her in carrying her son; and he takes her with transport from the abode of bitterness and woe. A coach in waiting soon conveys them to the prison of St. Andre. They are admitted. Blanche, fondly clasping her son, runs to throw herself in the arms of her husband. At this moment, they experience whatever Love and Joy can inspire in two fond hearts, exalted suddenly from the depth of despair to the summit of felicity. The Counsellor stood opposite to them, contemplating with rapture this delightful scene. 'Ah,' thought he, 'this is my work;' and doubtless, he was not the least happy of the three. On a sudden Blanche tears herself from her husband's arms, and throws herself at the feet of her generous benefactor. 'Here,' says she, 'is that guardian angel, that godlike being, that restores to thee thy wife, thy son, thy liberty!'—She cannot proceed: her tears, her sobbings deprive her of utterance. St. Andre flies—he prostrates himself by her side: 'Ah!' he exclaims, 'my heart, that has been tainted for five years past by the black sensations of hatred, renounce, from this instant, every idea of anger and revenge. Henceforth, it shall be only occupied by gratitude and love. Yes, I forget my persecutors and my misfortunes. I renounce the torment of hating; and I devote, for ever, every sentiment of my soul to the dear objects that are restored to me, and to the most generous of men.'

But the misfortunes of St. Andre were not exhausted yet. After this affecting scene, the remainder of his life presents nothing

'But a long series of perpetual woe.'

I will

I will relate the most interesting events of it. The Counsellor, his benefactor, received him into his family, and settled him, with his wife, in his country seat. There St. Andre lived in tranquillity for the space of several years. Having engaged himself in the management of the farm, his care and industry almost doubled its yearly produce, and afforded him the delight of being able to be useful to his generous friend. He often endeavoured to enter again into the service ; but he constantly found insurmountable obstructions in the active and incessant hatred of M. de Vilmore. He had the misfortune to lose his son, and, some time after, his benefactor and sole support. Overwhelmed with grief, he removed from the vicinity of Paris, with his wife, and bore his misery and afflictions to a remote province, where he resolved to live unknown by the labour of his hands. It was in Auvergne that he fixed his wretched destiny. His talents for husbandry, with the fortitude and resolution which this hapless pair exerted, enabled them to procure the means of subsistence ; and they both entered into the service of a rich farmer. St. Andre cultivated the earth, while his wife, forgetting the natural delicacy of her constitution, engaged in the management of the household business, and soon overcame her aversion for that laborious employment. During six years spent in this manner, St. Andre had several children, to whom he gave an education suitable to their present condition ; and having thus inured himself to his laborious but tranquil kind of life, he became, at last, the proprietor of a small spot of ground, in the cultivation of which he found a competent subsistence. To this he retired, and for ten years enjoyed all the sweets of serenity and peace. Content with his humble fortune, he forgets, in the embraces of his wife and children, that splendid situation to which his birth had entitled him. But even this felicity, lowly as it was, was too great to be permanent. An unexpected event destroyed all the efforts of time and reason, and plunged him again into the depths of misery. M. de Vilmore having been lingering, about a year, under a disease, from
which

which his physician assured him it was in vain to expect recovery, was awakened to some remorse for his unnatural conduct towards his son. His troubled conscience pointed to the tomb, and displayed to his affrighted soul all the horrors of approaching dissolution. Religion, so consolatory after a well-spent life, could only augment the inward terrors that incessantly haunted him. In vain, did he endeavour to divert his attention from these distracting thoughts. He was approaching fast to that closing scene, when the most perverse of mortals must cease to have the pernicious power of deceiving himself. Truth, so dreadful to the guilty, appeared with irresistible brightness, and terrible conviction, to dazzle and confound him. At last, he determined to cause some enquiries to be made after the situation of his son. He opened his mind to his steward, who was a man of probity, and greatly interested for the fate of St. Andre; and who, after various fruitless enquiries, discovered the place of his retreat, and wrote him the following letter:

‘ M. de Vilmore is dying and wishes to see you. His distracted heart is still capable of returning tenderness. Do not hesitate a moment, but fly to the arms of a father, who is now incessantly reproaching himself with all the miseries you have endured. Hasten to him, it is not yet too late: take advantage of these awful moments when the vain desires of pride and ambition vanish for ever. He wishes to see you, but has not sufficient resolution to desire it. He is surrounded by your enemies, who are already, in idea, ransacking his spoils and yours. I give you this intimation of his secret wishes. You have only to appear, and to lay your unfortunate family at his feet, and you will recover all your rights. But be speedy: every thing depends on your activity and expedition.’

St. Andre did not hesitate. The interest of his children prevails over all the reflections, which some foreboding fears suggest. He sells his little inclosure for a paltry sum, and sets out with his family. He cannot quit this favourite spot, without emotions, that bedew his face with tears. He regrets his humble cottage; nor

can he tear himself from it, without an inexpressible degree of anxiety and grief. To expedite his journey he is obliged to purchase a carriage, and to travel post; and his expences, in course, consume almost the whole produce of sixteen years of hard labour. At length, he descries the walls of Paris, and soon after the magnificent house of his father. At the sight of it, Blanche clasps her husband in her arms: 'Ah!' she exclaims, 'this would have been yours but for me; and can you regret the cottage we have left?'—St. Andre, all in tears, tenderly embraces her; and this moment, which at once displays to her eyes the great sacrifices with which her husband had never once reproached her; this moment, so flattering and so affecting, is perhaps one of the sweetest of her life.

But, alas! what distressing news awaited them! The good steward hastened to them; and informed them, that the evening before he had acquainted his master of their approaching arrival; but that this intelligence had not yet settled his fluctuating resolution; that he had passed a dreadful night, and, in the morning, perceiving his end to be hastening, he had at last sent for his Confessor, and, after two long conferences, had determined to make a new will.—'Hitherto,' continued the steward, 'every thing was in your favour. The good Priest, whom he entrusted with his confidence, so forcibly remonstrated with him, with respect to his conduct towards you, that, terrified with horror and apprehension, he did not hesitate to send for his Notary. But a moment after, your messenger being arrived, with information that you would be with him in two hours, M. de Vilmore was seized with such a perturbation of mind, as produced a most fatal change. He instantly lost the use of his speech; a situation so much more deplorable, as he still retains his senses and recollection. In a word, he knows that you are here; and he manifests the most earnest desire to see you. The physician says, that your presence may be productive of another change, and restore him to his speech.—Come, Sir, let us lose no time.'—At these words, St. Andre, followed by his family, hastens to his father's

father's apartment. M. de Vilmore, on seeing him enter, lifts up his eyes to Heaven, and extends his arms to him. St. Andre throws himself on his knees, at the foot of the bed. M. de Vilmore regards him with a look of the most pathetic expression; and the name of St. Andre escapes from his lips. His Confessor runs to him: 'Make an effort,' he cries: 'your notary is here: one word more, one single word, may confirm the future happiness of an unfortunate man, whom your silence and death would doom for ever to the most dreadful misery. Pray to God for grace to enable you, in these few remaining moments, to make reparation for all the sufferings of injured innocence.'—At these tremendous words M. de Vilmore clasps his hands together, and lifts them to Heaven. He opens his mouth, and appears earnest to speak; but, being only able to utter a few confused and inarticulate sounds, grief, terror, and remorse, are painted on his face. His arms begin to stiffen, and the paleness of death appears. The Confessor would present the crucifix to him: the dying wretch, raving in an agony of despair, casts a look of horror on his son; then beholding the offered crucifix with a wild and savage aspect, he trembles, he pushes it aside; and, at this instant, the most shocking convulsions terminate his guilty life. What an awful lesson does this dreadful scene afford those fathers, (if any such remain) who are capable of hating and abandoning their children! He died without making any alteration in favour of St. Andre; no other will was found, but what had been long before dictated by resentment. Thus, his resolution, and too late remorse, only served to render his end more fatal and deplorable, without reversing the situation of his unhappy son.

In the mean time, St. Andre, a thousand times more to be pitied than ever, perceived with horror, in what a variety of cruel misfortunes this last stroke had plunged him. He had still some money. He hired a room in an obscure part of the suburbs, and retired thither, with his family, to reflect, at least in the night, on the resolu-

tion it might be best to take. His children, fatigued by their journey, and still too young to feel the torments of anxiety, soon fell asleep, and peaceably enjoyed the most profound repose. One melancholy lamp gave light to this gloomy retreat. St. Andre, now silent and motionless, sat with distraction in his eye; then starting up, walked about the room, with precipitate and uncertain steps; every gesture bespeaking the violent agitation of his soul. Blanche, till then quite absorbed in her grief, beholds her husband; she trembles, and throwing herself at his feet: 'Oh! unhappy man,' she cries, 'in what misery have I involved you! But for me, but for this fatal love, that is now your ruin, you would have been happy, and your life would have been as fortunate and prosperous as it is now wretched and deplorable. But if thou love me still, thy courage will not forsake thee: let it revive at the voice of thy children!'——'My children!' answered St. Andre, 'my children! I have been able to endure thy misery and mine, but have these poor things thy reason and thy strength? Can I see them in misery and grief! No, no——it is better,'——At these words, he pauses, and, retiring to the other end of the room, sinks into a chair.—'O Heaven!' cried the terrified Blanche, 'what do you make me forbode? What dreadful design?'——She could speak no more: grief deprived her of utterance. St. Andre drew near her, and with a wild and distracted air, 'Blanche,' said he, 'believe me; dry up thy tears; we have endured life long enough; our task is finished; a moment can deliver us from our miseries; and my courage shall set thee the example.'——Blanche, collecting all her fortitude, exclaimed with a steady voice, 'Who? I! shall I thus defy heaven and nature? Shall I abandon my children? How cruel and impious should I be at once! Ah, as yet I am only unfortunate. Innocence still is mine. All, all I can yet endure. Yes, if thou doom me to the horror of surviving thee, I shall have the courage to endeavour to prolong at least my deplorable existence. I will live for thy children——for those poor innocents whom thou wouldst betray,

betray, and abandon without resource, to those miseries, which thou thyself hast no longer the fortitude to endure.'——At these words, some tears dropped from the eyes of St. Andre, and his wife seeing him softened seized the favourable moment to melt him still more, and lead him back to virtue. St. Andre, recovering from his distraction, acknowledged the impiety of his intentions: he renounced, he detested it; and he confessed, that Religion, Honour, and Nature, all commanded him to live. But his body sunk under such violent agitations; he was seized with a burning fever; and brought to the point of death. Blanche was now reduced to the lowest depth of misery. On one side, she beheld a dying husband; on the other, her wretched children struggling with all the hardships of cold and hunger. In this distress, she invoked Heaven, to terminate at once the miserable existence of so many innocent victims. One morning, sitting by her husband's side, she beheld his face, disfigured by the shades of death; and she recollected that period of her youth, when, in a situation nearly similar, she felt the first impressions of a passion since so fatal to them both. This recollection reviving her tenderness more forcibly than ever, she snatched one of his hands, and bedewing it with tears: 'O my dear husband,' said she, falling upon her knees, 'caust thou forgive me the torments with which my fatal love has embittered thy life?'——'Ah!' answered St. Andre, 'my last moments indeed are dreadful. I leave thee and my children in the depth of misery; but if this career of suffering and sorrow were to commence again, I would endure all for thee——As he ended these words, the door of the chamber suddenly flew open, and a most unexpected sight attracted the attention of this unhappy pair. A beautiful young lady, about four-and-twenty years old, enters the room, and with an air of benignity and compassion approaches the bed, leading by the hand a little girl, about seven years of age. Having dismissed her attendants, and shut the door, she addresses Blanche in a sweet voice, requesting her name. Blanche, con-

founded and abashed, hesitates, and is incapable of utterance. St. Andre, in spite of his weakness, makes an effort to raise himself, and briefly explains his unhappy situation.—‘ I see,’ says the lady, ‘ that I have not been deceived. God grant that I may not be come too late ! And you, my daughter,’ she continues, turning to her child, who was crying, ‘ take notice of this room and the affecting objects it contains. Never let the remembrance of them be effaced from your memory. Take this purse, and lay it at the foot of the bed. Approach it with that respect we owe to the unfortunate. Never forget it ; and render yourself worthy one day of the sacred employment with which I honour you.’

You will surely be desirous to know who was this generous and charming stranger ? It will interest you still more, when you learn, that it was Madame de Lagaraye, in all the bloom of youth, with that daughter whom she has since lost ; that only daughter, who died at fifteen ; and whom such examples, and such an education, could not but render the delight of this virtuous mother.—But to return to St. Andre ; M. de Lagaraye having learned his history, was so sensibly affected by his misfortunes, that he offered him an asylum on his estate ; and, at length, placed him at the head of his new establishments, of which St. Andre has had the direction for six years. M. de Lagaraye has provided for all his children ; and to his other benefits has added the gift of a charming house, surrounded by an excellent kitchen-garden. It is in this agreeable retreat that the remainder of a life, hitherto so turbulent, now steals away in delightful repose. Here the praises of Monsieur and Madame de Lagaraye are uttered every hour ; and here their venerable names are inscribed on every wall, and incessantly celebrated by the affectionate voice of sentiment and gratitude.

V A T H E K,
A
C O M E D Y;
IN TWO ACTS.

A disinterested and generous man is born a ruler; and he is at the same time the greatest of politicians, were policy only to be considered.

SIR C. GRANDISON, vol. vii

THE PERSONS.

Motasssem, *The Caliph.*
Vathek, *Son of Motasssem.*
Almanzor, *Vathek's governor.*
The Vizier.
Osmyrn, *Son of the Vizier.*
Nasser, *Friend of the Vizier.*
Jaffier, *Friend of Almanzor.*

Scene in the Caliph's palace.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

Represents the Inside of an Apartment in the Palace.

Nasser and Vizier.

Nasser.

LET us wait here; the young Prince has not yet returned from hunting; let us therefore converse freely. I wish to communicate a secret of some import-

ance to you : Fortune has at length given us an opportunity to overthrow our common enemy ; that enemy, who is in as high favour with the Caliph as yourself, and has totally destroyed my credit with him—the austere, unsociable, Almanzor.

Vizier. Let me hear.

Nasser. These infamous verses, which are intended to affront our Sovereign and his Vizier with such daring insolence, I have certain proof are the production of Boulaski.

Vizier. So !—This discovery may be of service ; and especially, as Almanzor has obtained with much earnest intreaty, a place of some importance for this same Boulaski.

Nasser. Present the verses to the Caliph ; let him know their author ; assure him that these verses were published previous to Almanzor's application in his behalf ; and then insinuate his hatred against you.

Vizier. It is rather unfortunate, that the character of the Caliph has been abused along with mine—It will not appear probable to him, that Almanzor can have any interest in such a proceeding.

Nasser. Our point is not to convince him that Almanzor was the author, but that the verses met his secret approbation ; you may also insinuate that for these twelve months past, he has been dissatisfied with the Caliph, because, when the place of Vizier was vacant, he expected it, in preference to that of Governor to the young Prince ; which is also the cause of his umbrage at you : in fine, you must warily hint all these circumstances, as if reluctantly ; and if a slight suspicion only is raised, the progress from distrust to aversion is with princes very short.

Vizier. The Caliph has abundance of discernment, and esteems Almanzor ; indeed, notwithstanding my dislike to him, I cannot but at times approve the friendship he shows him. Employed these ten years past in the education of the young Prince, Almanzor, intermeddles

meddles with no public affairs; but with the utmost disinterestedness seems to have no other ambition than discharging his duty; Flattery and Intrigue he appears ignorant of; and exhibits a rare pattern of philosophy, virtue and discretion, were there not reason to suspect his designs are deep and well concealed.

Nasser. Believe me, *Vizier*, if such a character exists, it is not at court; and, I have no doubt, all this seeming moderation, is but a covering to deep rooted ambition: and indeed, it has served his purpose well—Does not fortune pursue him, anxious to give more favours than he seems willing to receive?—Does he ask any thing in vain? True, he does not *appear* a man of intrigue; yet every day he is higher in favour with the Caliph than yesterday; see, how he has wheedled into the good graces of the Prince!—I pretend not to know the secret motives of Almanzor's policy, but sure I am his designs are well laid, if we may judge of them by their success: Beware then lest you prove his dupe.

Vizier. My dear *Nasser*, your sentiments are mine: I am convinced Almanzor is a rival the more dangerous, because his ambitious views are well concealed; and to return your confidence, let me tell you, I have made a discovery, which will I hope put it in my power to convince the Caliph, and detect Almanzor.

Nasser. I am anxious to hear it.

Vizier. Young Vathek is deeply enamoured of Zulica.

Nasser. Almanzor's daughter!—

Vizier. The same; my son Osmyn has had the address to extort a confession from him.

Nasser. And Osmyn told you what passed between them.

Vizier. He did—it was only yesterday.

Nasser. So there can be little doubt that Almanzor secretly favoured the young Prince's passion, for the furtherance of his ambitious projects.

Vizier. There is every reason to think so.

Nasser. But what opportunity had Vathek to get acquainted with Zulica?

Vizier. By means of the Princess, the Caliph's mother.

Nasser. Right—and this is a very natural reason for Almanzor's attention and regard for the Princess. The Caliph and his mother were not on very good terms, but Almanzor found means to reconcile them to each other.

Vizier. And in reward for such service, the Princess has almost adopted Zulica as her daughter; she cannot bear to be absent from her one infant. She is undoubtedly acquainted with Vathek's love; and, seduced by her favourite, perhaps conceives the foolish hope of gaining the approbation of the Caliph.—What confirms me in this opinion is, the Caliph's having been for some months past desirous of fixing on a wife for the Prince; and the choice he had made might be a very advantageous connection for the kingdom; but the Princess his mother, and Almanzor, dissuaded him on different pretences, which were more specious than solid; alledging, among other reasons, the extreme youth of the Prince.—

Nasser. How will the Caliph be provoked when he discovers this criminal intrigue!—Do not delay one moment to acquaint him with it; it is your most important duty.

Vizier. I shall certainly discharge it—and I am persuaded, that Almanzor cannot escape the artful snare which I have laid for him.—I this morning entreated the Caliph to demand his daughter Zulica for my son; and if he refuses, of which I have no doubt, he is ruined.—

Nasser. Come to my arms, my dear Vizier, you transport me with admiration!—I am less animated by the hatred I bear Almanzor, than from the joy I ought to feel at the important service you are about to render to the state, by overturning the audacious projects of an ambitious man, who, I find, is capable of every thing. We shall at last, then, be witnesses of the downfall of this

this pretended philosopher, that haughty man, against whom hatred and conspiracies seemed only to inspire him with indifference and disdain.—Now he will lose that unjust superiority which he has maintained over us: how provoking his affected moderation! our ears will no longer be fatigued with the tiresome repetition of his praises!—By his hypocritical conduct he has obliged his enemies, these fifteen years, either to join in his praise or to be silent: but, thanks to your zeal and abilities, we shall now be revenged.

Vizier. Yes, yes, we shall indeed; but let us conduct ourselves with prudence, and by dissimulation conceal our just resentment. Being obliged for some time past to yield to the torrent, or rather to the will of the Caliph, I have affected to be reconciled to Almanzor, and we must still keep him in that persuasion; but this very day I would wish you to have a conversation with that intimate friend of Almanzor, that gloomy misanthrope, Jaffier; a severe man, who lives at court only to condemn its honours, to slight its customs and manners, and who seems to be virtuous with no other view but to have a right of censuring others. See him, and converse with him; and endeavour to persuade him that I sincerely wish for the friendship of Almanzor.—

Nasser. I have little hope of any good from such a conversation. Jaffier is so distrustful, so filled with pride and contempt for us!—He has all the savage austerity of Almanzor, without his affected gentleness, his politeness or address.—In short, the rusticity and bluntness of Jaffier are so disgusting—

Vizier. Hush—I hear a noise; certainly it is the Prince returned from hunting; let us go and present ourselves.—

Nasser. Here he comes.—

SCENE II.

Vizier, Nasser, Vathek, Almanzor, Osmyn, Jaffier. *

VATHEK. I understood my father was here.—

Vizier. He will presently, my Lord; my orders were to request you would wait his coming.

Osmyn, (to the Vizier.) The Prince has done a noble action this morning.

Vizier. I doubt it not indeed.

Osmyn. It deserves to be recorded—with the Prince's permission, Almanzor will tell you the particulars.

Almanzor. I will;—The Prince took the lead in the chase this morning, contrary to my advice, and left us all behind.

Vizier. 'Tis like his usual vivacity.

Nasser. And he rides so gracefully.

Osmyn. And mounts his horse with so much spirit.

Jaffier. Mean Flatterers. [Aside.]

Osmyn. Indeed none of us could keep up with him.

Almanzor. That is true; he cannot manage his horse, who always runs away with him, and by that means he goes faster than any of us.

Vizier. Raillery is charming.—

Vathek. No, no, Almanzor is not thinking of raillery; he tells me truth; and what is still better, he has taught me to hear it with pleasure.

Almanzor. But let us return to our history. The Prince met an old man, * whose little cart had been overturned in a ditch; and the poor peasant was employing every effort in vain to disengage it.

Vathek.

* This anecdote is taken entirely from the history of the Arabs, and happened to the Caliph Motasssem, the father of Vathek, when he was very young.

See the History of the Arabs, by Marigny.

Vathek. Tell likewise, that this good old man had the most venerable engaging figure; beautiful grey locks hung waving on his shoulders, and the sweat run down his face; leaning against a tree, oppressed with fatigue and grief, he lifted his eyes filled with tears, and his trembling hands to heaven; when I approached him, I found him in that affecting situation.—Poor good man, I think I see him still—

Almanzor. You may guess the rest. The Prince dismounted from his horse, and lent a helping hand to the old man: he drew the cart out of the ditch, and gave his purse to the peasant; who, being transported with joy and gratitude, was in tears thanking and blessing his benefactor, when we arrived on the spot where it happened. The old man, when he was informed that the young person to whose charitable assistance he was so much indebted, was the son of his sovereign, remained for some time motionless; then joining his hands and raising them towards Heaven, exclaimed, ‘O God, for his reward, do thou preserve to him that compassionate, generous heart!’—

Jaffier. The best wish, undoubtedly, which gratitude and virtue could offer up for a Prince!—Better than all the pompous panegyrics of all the courtiers in the world.—

Vathek. Yes, Jaffier, I am sensible of its full value; the good old man’s prayer will be heard; yes, I am certain of it, my heart will never change.

Vizier. I know nothing so truly affecting as this story. This, my Lord, is the fruit of the lessons of Almanzor.—

Almanzor. This action of the Prince was so simple and so natural, that I can assume no share in the merit.

Jaffier. Yes, Almanzor, it is unquestionably very natural to assist a wretched old man, reduced to despair, and who so easily can be made happy; but, nevertheless, you may expect to-morrow to see verses and poems composed to celebrate the same action which you think so simple.

Vizier.

Vizier. Enthusiasm, inspired by benevolence, is always excusable.

Jaffier. No exaggeration can ever be excusable; I even think it offensive to whomsoever it is offered. What do all the encomiums lavished upon a common transaction signify, if it is not that the author is surprised and confounded at finding that he who did it is capable of it, and that he was very far from expecting even a simple instance of humanity?—

Nasser. (*aside.*) Detestable misanthrope!—

Vizier. For my part, I own to you that the action of the Prince is deserving of praise.

Vathek. No, no; Jaffier is right; I only discharged an indispensable duty; and, as a proof, if I had conducted myself differently, Almanzor would certainly have reproved me.

Almanzor. Undoubtedly, my Lord: but however, at your age, when virtue and good principles cannot as yet be arrived at perfection, there is a merit in doing our duty; and what heightens yours upon the present occasion is, your love of the chase, and your ardour in the pursuit of it, which you without hesitation sacrificed to the pleasure of being useful to the poor old man.

Nasser. Indeed, the Prince's love of hunting adds a high value to the sacrifice!

Jaffier. So it is very naturally to be expected that a love of hunting should prevail over compassion and humanity; and the desire of killing an innocent animal exceed that of assisting an unfortunate old man?—

Almanzor. Jaffier, you forget that the Prince is but sixteen years old: I believe that circumstance will give weight to our side of the argument.

Jaffier. Since you join the rest, it is time for me to yield.—(*To Vathek.*) Well, my Lord, since Almanzor himself says so, you may be persuaded that you have performed an admirable, sublime, unexampled action, which surpasses the united exploits of all the heroes of antiquity.—What is the matter, Almanzor? Do I say any thing that deserves to be laughed at? Is it not quite

quite conformable to your own language?—Am I the only person that must appear ridiculous in flattering?

Almanzor. You rally, and we laugh; there is no better way of replying to raillery.—

Jaffier. I rally!—Who, I! You know that I do not rally—it is not my disposition to rally.—All that I see, and all that I hear, can excite no degree of mirth in me: but I do not wish to disturb yours; amuse yourself without constraint; I leave you at perfect freedom.

[*Goes hastily out.*]

SCENE III.

Almanzor, Vathek, Vizier, Osmyn, Nasser.

ALMANZOR. This is another sample of Jaffier's rudeness.

Vizier. But his many valuable qualifications make ample atonement for this defect.

Vathek. Unusual Candour is the genuine source of his ill-humour.

Almanzor. Candour, my Lord, does not consist in rudeness, and it is absurd to imagine that one good quality excuses a fault which may be justly termed insupportable in society: for, in fact, the most virtuous man is generally the most eminent for moderation and gentleness; no ostentation or pompous shew with him; he endeavours to make truth amiable, because he loves it, and therefore avoids all harsh and disobliging austerity, lest he should bring it into contempt.

Vathek. You have been drawing the picture of a worthy man indeed, for it is the picture of *Almanzor*.

Almanzor. Yet, notwithstanding, you may be assured, that Jaffier is possessed of several rare, and very valuable qualifications, however they are obscured by his declamatory ill-breeding. In general, I have little dependence on the probity of those people who allow nothing to the world; yet even some of these semi-misanthropes can be honest—In laying down general rules, whereby

to

to judge of mankind, some exceptions must be admitted, otherwise we resign ourselves to prejudice and chimera.

Vizier. These precepts become both Teacher and Pupil—but I must attend the Caliph, lest he should not have heard of the Prince's return. Come along, *Os-myn* and *Nasser*.

Os-myn and Nasser. We follow.

[*The Vizier, Os-myn and Nasser go out.*]

SCENE IV.

Almanzor and Vathek.

ALMANZOR, (pausing a little.) You appear, my Lord, as it buried in thought.

Vathek. Some melancholy reflection disturbed me.

Almanzor. Of what kind?

Vathek. I thought of flattery; a vice, I think I detest, and yet I am often deceived by it.—Indeed, *Almanzor*, I should have often been its dupe, but for you.

Almanzor. Detest it always, and you will have no cause of apprehension; it will never be able to mislead you.

Vathek. But when it assumes the tone of friendship, it is so persuasive, so dangerous!—

Almanzor. One certain means of avoiding the snares of flattery, is to learn to know ourselves, to consider our faults, and reflect upon our conduct; in short, to judge of them with severity: and if we find the praises which are offered exceed the opinion we have of our own merit, we may be assured they are dictated by flattery.—But I repeat it to you, that to make such means effectual, you must examine yourself with care, and judge with rigour. Another method of disconcerting flattery is, to seem insensible to it, and to hear it with coldness. Happy the Prince who knows how to awe it into silence! Your august father offers you an example of this; no one dare praise him to his face, and the most hardy courtier

tier will not presume to address his flattery to him directly.

Vathek. So I perceive: they are obliged to attempt it by oblique hints; and I saw an instance of this a few days ago. It was Nasser who was praising him, though standing only four paces distant: my father turned round, and Nasser seemed surprised and embarrassed; but that was all a pretence, for he spoke on purpose to be heard. I plainly observed it, for you had taught me to see their mean arts. What is very extraordinary, I am no longer deceived where my father is concerned, but am still so at times in my own case. For example, there is Osmyn, though he is but eighteen, knows already how to flatter, and very artfully.—He seemed to love me; he is nearly of my age; and if you had not warned me, I should have thought him sincere.—He cannot love me, since he attempts to deceive me. What, must a Prince forego the happiness of having friends?

Almanzor. When they condemn flatterers, when they cherish the language of truth, and reward real abilities and merit instead of intrigue and assiduity, they will find sincere and virtuous friends.

Vathek. But, Almanzor, you know how much I loved the son of Jaffier: I preferred him to all who came near me; he is beloved by you, and was educated by you along with me; I esteemed his character; his person was agreeable to me; he possessed my entire confidence: and yet, I am persuaded, he had not a sincere friendship for me: I easily perceived that he did not find the same pleasing satisfaction in our conversation that I did; he was frequently lost in thought.

Almanzor. Perhaps he had some secret reason. —

Vathek. But wherefore conceal it from me? —

Almanzor. Undoubtedly it must have been your fault. — Princes in general look upon those whom they honour with the name of friends, only as confidants; they think that none but their secrets are truly important; the little interests which affect us, appear to them too trifling to merit much attention; in short, their sole pleasure

pleasure is in speaking of themselves: they condescend to place confidence in individuals; but the confidence which is shown in return is tiresome, or at least what they do not desire: they cannot then inspire it, and are only beloved by halves; nor friendship cannot subsist without mutual and entire confidence.

Vathek. I am sensible of that; but, however, I believe I was not guilty of that fault with Nadir: when I observed his attention engaged, I questioned him, I entreated him, to let me know if he wished for any thing or if I could be useful to him, and did not desist from pressing him till he assured me he had nothing to desire.

Almanzor. And must a favour be asked to procure the attention of a friend?—With a delicate, feeling mind, could not you desire a less interested confidence? Surely you cannot but know that from the heart alone must proceed the purest comforts which friendship can receive; and that to partake of griefs with which we have been intrusted, is the surest means to soften and diminish them.

Vathek. O Almanzor! this is a new subject of instruction to me; and I own I feel an inward shame at the thought of such a lesson being necessary; it is the first I have received from you which has made me blush.—What! the heart then as well as the understanding has need of instruction!—Ah, why has Nadir been these six months absent? Now that I am informed of the duties of friendship, the hope of meriting his makes me wish for his return more anxiously than ever.—When is he expected?

Almanzor. I do not know—But are you certain you will always continue to love him?—

Vathek. Yes, next to you, Nadir shall be my dearest friend.

Almanzor. I wish it because I believe him worthy.

Vathek. Can I ever change the friend who has been the object of your choice?—

Almanzor. I wish you to love him while he prefers your glory to your favour; while he continues sincere and disinterested: but if he ceases to be moderate in his desires,

desires, if he meddles in state-intrigues, if he takes indirect methods of speaking useful truths, withdraw from him without hesitation; he will then no longer be the friend chosen for you by Almanzor. If you continue to be attached to him, no doubt great efforts will be employed to ruin him; you should let him know the accusations that are laid against him. Do not judge of him without giving him a hearing; and, especially, be careful to distrust any informer, let him be who he will, who desires to be concealed, and dreads having his name mentioned to the person accused. — But, my Lord, while we are alone, I meant to give you another piece of advice. I have frequently observed that Osmyn presumes to give himself up to his natural turn for raillery and ridicule, even in your presence. —

Vathek. Though I may sometimes listen to his humour, I never take any share in it. —

Almanzor. That is not sufficient, you ought not to suffer it; the people who are the subjects of Osmyn's mockeries, seeing that you are entertained with the ridicule to which he exposes them, must think that you approve of the unworthy courtier who endeavours to please you by such contemptible methods. Mockery is always faulty, but in a Prince it is cruel; think, my Lord, that you pierce the man to the soul whom you ridicule. 'Tis true, you attack him only with raillery; but can he retort! or, if he had the boldness, would you suffer it? He is defenceless, yet you oppress him: — and still you call this inhuman injustice by the names of gaiety and pleasantry. Ah, my Lord, the prince who forgets what is due to his own rank, debases and destroys his dignity! Grandeur, if it is not accompanied with generosity, obtains only vain exterior homage; and that which is the effect of sentiment, and what alone is desirable, will always be with-held.

Vathek. Ah! Almanzor, the greatest happiness a Prince can know, is that of being beloved; I swear it is the greatest of my ambition.

Almanzor. See then, my Lord, whether you ought to depend upon the attachment of Osmyn, since, to divert you

you for a few moments, he runs the hazard of making you hated!—

Vathek. (*sighing.*) Divert me!—it would be difficult to divert me!—For a long time, especially these three months—

Almanzor. Well, my Lord?

Vathek. Nothing can amuse me; nothing can command my attention.—

Almanzor. And—what is the reason?

Vathek. You know it, I am certain you do.

Almanzor. I would rather owe your secrets to your confidence, than to my own penetration.

Vathek. You must have discovered them; and if they are agreeable to you, you will spare me the pain of a confession which I dare not make.—You do not reply!

Almanzor. My Lord, I have nothing to say.—

Vathek. Very well, then let us talk no more!

[*He sinks into a reverie.*]

Almanzor. I am ready to offer you my advice if you desire it—But if you expect a criminal indulgence, it were much better, my Lord, that you should be silent.—

Vathek. Why so severe? Is sensibility a crime?—

Almanzor. Surely it is a crime to forget what is reasonable and becoming, and above all to be mastered by our passions. But the door opens; 'tis the Caliph.—

Vathek. Almanzor, my dear Almanzor, how you distress me!—

Almanzor. My Lord, the Caliph approaches.

SCENE V.

Caliph, Almanzor, Vathek.

Caliph, (to attendants.) Retire.—I wish to have some conversation with you, Almanzor; and I mean to make a proposal which I hope will please you.

Almanzor. I wish to hear it, my Lord.

Caliph.

Caliph. Your reconciliation with the Vizier is, I doubt not, sincere.

Almanzor. On my part, I am sure it is.

Caliph. And he has just been giving me an evidence, that it is so on his.—He asks your daughter in marriage for his son.

Vathek, (aside.) Heavens!

Almanzor. My Lord, the only son of your Vizier, may justly aspire to a more advantageous alliance than my daughter, who is far from his equal in fortune.

Caliph. But is she not the daughter of my friend? and is it not in my power to make her fortune equal to whatever husband you shall chuse for her.

Almanzor. Mine fully answers my wishes; it is sufficient, for I am happy.

Caliph. Mark me, the Vizier asks Zulica for his son; and as his only object is an alliance to unite you for ever, he asks only *her*, and desires you will retain the fortune you intended for her.

Almanzor. I cannot give him Zulica, my Lord.

Vathek, (aside.) I rejoice to hear it.

Caliph. Almanzor, I will by no means insist, I have ever declared it my intention to leave you at full liberty to dispose of her as you please, without my interference; therefore I will only observe, that your refusal surprises me.

Vathek. Perhaps, my Lord, the person of Osmyn is not agreeable to Almanzor; he may have faults which may render him disagreeable; I know he dissembles and flatters.

Almanzor. I have no particular dislike to him; he has faults, but they are such as he may amend, he is but eighteen.

Vathek. But is he agreeable to your daughter?

Almanzor. My pleasure is hers, (*addressing the Caliph.*) The only favour I ever presumed to beg of you, my Lord, was to leave the disposal of Zulica to me; you granted it—suffer me to remind you of your promise.

Caliph. Enough, enough; say no more of it, though your refusal does surprise me, I will not even wish to know

know the cause——Vathek, your dislike to Osmyn is new to me.——

Vathek. I cannot say I hate Osmyn ; but, my Lord, I know him, and——

Caliph. Come, come, let us change the subject——my son, I have been told you have a favour to ask me.

Vathek. True, my Lord : it is for Hadi and Omar.

Caliph. Do you esteem them ; or are you intimately acquainted with them ?

Vathek. I cannot say I am, my Lord ; but they often follow me to the chace ; and have entreated me so often these three months past to speak to you for them, that in order to get quit of them——

Almanzor. Indeed ! and while modest, humble merit would have passed unnoticed, you interest yourself in behalf of importunity and indiscretion.

Caliph. And I must reward Hadi and Omar, because they were troublesome to you ?——Vathek, when you mean to make application to me in future, I would have you attend to two things : whether the person for whom you solicit merits the favour ; and, if granting it will be attended with no injustice.——Somebody comes ; I presume it is the Vizier ; therefore retire, while I communicate your answer.

Vathek, (aside as he retires.) O Zulica ! Zulica ! To what happy man are you appointed ?

[*They go out.*]

SCENE VI.

Caliph, Solus.

I cannot divine the meaning of Almanzor's refusal, nor my son's concern about it ; they both seemed discontented, and Vathek was much embarrassed——It was only yesterday that Almanzor dissuaded me much from marrying my son.——My imagination is crowded with a thousand suspicious circumstances——Yet I cannot sus-
pect

pect Almanzor.—To abuse friendship distracts me on the one hand, and prudence is alarmed on the other—No, I will not, I cannot suspect Almanzor. If fifteen years of faithful service, will not ensure the favour of a Prince, what will?—It is better to be the dupe of credulity than ingratitude.—

S C E N E VII.

Caliph and Vizier.

Vizier, (aside.) He appears disturbed and thoughtful!—Almanzor has refused I suppose.

Caliph. Vizier, come hither.

Vizier. May I presume, my Lord, to ask Almanzor's answer.

Caliph. He is fully sensible of this proof of your regard, but has it not in his power to give you his daughter.—No doubt there are other engagements.

Vizier. Is it possible!—I must own, I am amazed. For whom does he refuse me Zulica? Can he indeed—

Caliph. Can he—what?—Speak out your mind.

Vizier. I intreat, my Lord, you will excuse my being silent; a rash word escaped me.—Almanzor will still be my enemy; I am not his; it was your command, and I hope, my Lord, my sincerity is proved.—

Caliph. But I wish to hear what you just now intended to say.

Vizier. My Lord, I trusted my openness and honesty were better known to you; I did not conceal my hatred of Almanzor formerly when I felt it; no, I fully told you of his duplicity and ill usage, and of my resentment.

Caliph. I know you did; but vilifying an enemy is not always a proof of candour.

Vizier. It is the province of an artful designing man to conceal his resentment, and thereby he more certainly gains his ends; while the honest man tells his feelings freely

freely and without disguise; despising the revenge that would be purchased by dissimulation.

Caliph. But in the mean time, Vizier, answer my question; what do you suppose are the grounds of Almanzor's refusal?

Vizier. I told you, my Lord, it astonished me; and at first hearing of it, a foolish whisper among his enemies occurred to me.

Caliph. What? what foolish whisper? explain yourself.—But I cannot credit it, nor will I question Almanzor's fidelity.

Vizier. I keep silence most thankfully on a subject which merits so much contempt. I know Almanzor to be ambitious; he disdains an alliance with my family, yet has too much prudence, experience and understanding, to involve himself in a scheme, which is at once rash, infatuated and chimerical: therefore, my Lord, allow me to introduce another subject.—For some days past, the public has been in possession of a most injurious libel against your sacred person and government: it likewise abuses me, which I could however have borne in silence.

Caliph. Does it libel me, say you?

Vizier. In very strong terms, my Lord.

Caliph. Have you a copy of it?

Vizier. Here it is, my Lord.

Caliph. I will peruse it;—the hints of an enemy may at times be useful. [Reads.]

Vizier. The infamous Author of the verses I have discovered, by means of the person he employed to copy them; and by threats on the one hand, and promises on the other, he was induced to betray the Author and deliver the original into my hands.

Caliph, (having read it.) It is evident both you and I are much abused in this piece; let us join together in mutually pardoning the offender.*

Vizier. My Lord——

* This is the very answer given on a similar occasion by Agis, Caliph of Egypt, to his Vizier.

Caliph.

Caliph. You say, you can prove the author of this infamous libel—who is he? I wish to know his name, it is the only revenge I can take.

Vizier. But, my Lord, is not this unprecedented generosity dangerous? Any individual is entitled to have justice of his calumniator, how much more the Sovereign.

Caliph. A private individual, you say well, is entitled to justice, because his character and property may be injured, and a reparation is necessary; but a Sovereign is above a reparation, and therefore should be also above an offence. True, his person may suffer insult, but not his reputation. His duty therefore who can offend with impunity is to learn to pardon freely; and shall the impotent ravings of a madman incite my anger?—No! I know no sensation more pleasing, more truly noble, than to meet insult with generosity, hatred with clemency, and to turn rage and insolence into admiration and remorse! If all those who have abused me, know how much I delight in pardoning; they would meet me with acknowledgements, instigated by repentance, perhaps affection.

Vizier. I doubt not, it would much surprise you to learn who is the author of these verses.

Caliph. Who is he?

Vizier. That very man, to whom you have within these few days granted a most important favour.——
Boulaski.

Caliph. Boulaski!

Vizier. 'Tis he indeed, my Lord, I cannot help pitying Almanzor, he must feel abashed, in having within these few days, solicited you in his favour, however united to him by ties of blood.

Caliph. Almanzor did not solicit for Boulaski, you are misinformed.

Vizier. Is it possible!

Caliph. The Vizier, your predecessor, hated Boulaski, and abused him to me: I was imposed upon, and dealt unjustly by him:——This crime of the Vizier, was of a

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species,

species, no prince should ever pardon; on the contrary it should be punished with the utmost severity. Boulaski, made appeals to me; I rejected them and divested him of his employments; he left the court, and trusting to his friend Almanzor's interest, long flattered himself with the hopes of being recalled. Often did Almanzor require an explanation, and attempt his defence; and was as often rejected. But truth, which even at court makes its appearance at times, at length discovered the imposition and amazed me. You know what followed; Boulaski was recalled and loaded with favours:—And thus, what I was impelled to by my own conscience, is generally attributed to Almanzor's interest.

Vizier, (aside.) This I did not suspect!

Caliph. And thus it appears, that Boulaski irritated by undeserved misfortunes, thought of revenging by slander; and his crime of consequence retorts on myself. He was innocent, I made him guilty; his character was formerly unstained, his only bad action was the effect of my misconduct.——Have these verses been long in circulation?

Vizier. Only a few days preceding Boulaski's recal.

Caliph. Unhappy man!——what must have been his feelings, when he saw how I regretted his misfortunes, and loaded him with gifts.

Vizier. And will you, my lord, continue him in his employments?

Caliph. I cannot, which I regret; but the author of an anonymous libel is unworthy of public trust; his crime is a base one, and no part of administration can henceforward be committed to him; I have dealt hardly with him, and he merits a recompence, which must be money; he shall also have his liberty, my pity and my free pardon. Meantime bring me the original; I know his writing, and can then give my final judgment upon his conduct.

[*He retires.*]

S C E N E

S C E N E VIII.

Vizier solus.

Who would have supposed that Almanzor was not instrumental in Boulaski's recal? But he has refused Ofmyn, and I have no doubt reserves his daughter in hopes of her union with the Prince——The Caliph appeared distressed and uneasy; this then is the time to let him know particulars; I will go in search of Nasser and Ofmyn, and concert our measures together for the downfall of this proud favourite. [*He retires.*]

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

Almanzor and Jaffier.

JAFFIER. They are plotting against you, I am certain. Nasser follows and flatters me; talks of the high esteem which the Vizier has for you; this is nothing but a mask for treachery; and so you will experience it, believe me——

Almanzor. Let us then wait the discovery, and not distress ourselves with previous doubts.

Jaffier. And is this your prudence; you really misplace indolence for philosophy.

Almanzor. And you constantly take the gloomy side of every thing; you terrify yourself with a constant suspicion of snares, plots, conspiracies and ambuscades; how often have you fancied danger and been mistaken; yet you will ever distress yourself anticipating what will probably never take place.——

Jaffier. 'Tis well, be it so!——The Vizier rejoices in your prosperity; is obliged to you for refusing Of-

myn; you bask in royal favour without envy—So be it, since you will have it so—my suspicions are groundless.

Almanzor. I know I have enemies, but not so many nor so dangerous as you suspect. To judge from your account the only sentiment of their soul is antipathy to me; and their sole employment to injure me. For my part I consider your ideas as groundless and ridiculous.

Jaffier. The Vizier is not a base man, capable of going the greatest lengths in wickedness?

Almanzor. No.——

Jaffier. No.——

Almanzor. I know he is suspicious and jealous, but not decidedly wicked. Nay, he is a man possessed of many valuable qualifications; he is sensible, judicious and spirited; and he ably discharges his duty to the State; in fine, he is an excellent servant to the Caliph and his Country.

Jaffier. And you imagine he has no malice at you?

Almanzor. If he has, it is because he does not know me. He fancies I am an ambitious hypocrite, judging as a Courtier. Why should I be displeased with his hatred; were his ideas of me just, I would deserve his contempt.

Jaffier. And you suppose, that were he acquainted with your character, he would act differently.

Almanzor. Surely; for then he would not dread me.

Jaffier. By your reasoning, virtue is ever respected and admired.

Almanzor. Whoever appears modest and diffident, indulgent and gentle, will be forgiven the superiority his virtue gives him.

Jaffier. With you then the case is different, they have maltreated and envied you these ten years past.

Almanzor. At court, I must acknowledge, worth is not always respected, till after a time; but in the end prejudices will be overcome; when the long wished-for victory is doubly satisfactory and pleasing.

Jaffier. Never, no, never, can a triumph over the aversion of the wicked be expected; it is with regret I foresee

foresee that you will one day become the victim of your own security and the depravity of courtiers.

Almanzor. Depravity?—Strange expression!

Jaffier. Yes, I maintain it; they are all depraved, all corrupted.—

Almanzor. They have indeed in general great and marked defects; but have they not likewise powerful excuses? The dissipated life of a courtier, scarcely leave him a moment for reflection: and our principles and virtues can only be secured by reflection. Besides, to what kinds of seduction is not a man in office exposed? He must at once gratify the avidity of his relations, friends, and followers. This mercenary crowd, by whom he is constantly beset, are earnestly employed to corrupt him by the meanest adulation; he never receives disinterested advice; the sole conversation which he hears, is about schemes of aggrandisement; they endeavour to direct his whole attention to honours and fortune: and, what is worse, every one about him is earnestly employed in representing his particular enemies in the most odious colours; so that this unfortunate man never hears any thing applauded in a minister but pomp and magnificence, and favours profusely scattered on his followers. No body will show a sufficient spirit to tell him, that in a high rank of life the only sign of true greatness is moderation, and the only enviable glory the public esteem. In short, he is exposed to more dangers than a sovereign: like him, he has all the snares of flattery to dread, and, what is more, all the temptations of wealth and honours; and cannot have (especially in the beginning of his administration) the love of the people, that paternal sentiment which acts so powerfully in the heart of a good prince. However, notwithstanding so many hazards, for all that you say, Jaffier, the ten years that I have lived at court, I have not seen one favourite who could with justice be called a bad man; I have seen much injustice and inconsistency; yet, generally, rather to be ascribed to blindness and imbecillity, than to wickedness

edness. In a word, I have witnessed many noble deeds and generous proceedings, but never one base action.

Jaffier. Yet, in the morning they will do a noble action, and in the evening a mean one. They have neither character nor steadiness in their hearts.

Almanzor. They are not philosophers; I grant you every one who has not studied and reformed himself, and laid down an invariable rule for his conduct, must be weak and inconsistent. Do you imagine, Jaffier, that if you and I had not spent a part of our lives in solitude and meditation, we should be what we now are? Undoubtedly we should not. Let us therefore excuse the faults of those who, by being thrown into the vortex of a court in their early days, have been prevented from making those reflections to which we owe the solidity of our principles. Perhaps we ought rather to be surprised at their having so many good qualities?—However, I am persuaded that there are some souls of a superior cast, who, without the help of education, and notwithstanding they are exposed to the influence of a bad example, can exalt themselves above every thing with which they are beset: and you may depend upon it, Jaffier, that among those courtiers, the objects of your contempt, there are some truly valuable; and their good qualities are the more worthy of admiration, as they are indebted for them solely to the excellence of their natural disposition.

Jaffier. You will at least allow that virtue is rarely to be met with in a court, and is there surrounded with shoals and dangers; yet, in this accursed residence you have consented to educate the young Prince!

Almanzor. What, would you have me educate him in a desert? him who must one day guide and govern men, a knowledge of whom is of course the most important lesson he can be taught!——

Jaffier. In your place I would not have undertaken such a charge, or I would have had leave to instruct him at a distance from intrigue and flattery.

Almanzor. In solitude must not I have been obliged to warn him against the dangers that are to be found at court?

court? And what information can be of equal value with a single observation? With an attentive, vigilant, and upright governor, a Prince can be no where so well educated as at court: It is there alone that all the arts of courtiers can be exposed, where their little artifices may be so easily penetrated; it is there that he may be instructed, so as to prevent his becoming a dupe to designing men; to detest vice when exposed to his view; and still more, by the means of contrast, to cherish virtue when he sees the example set before his eyes.

Jaffier. I allow that you have discharged your duty as well as you could in such a situation; but your work is still imperfect, and it is doubtful whether you will be permitted to finish it.—

Almanzor. How can I be prevented!—If no longer permitted to remain the Prince's governor, I shall not on that account cease to be his friend; he will always consult me; I shall give him my advice, and must ever preserve that influence over his mind which cannot fail to secure his confidence, esteem, and gratitude.

Jaffier. So, Almanzor, you propose then never to forsake the court? What, will you abandon for ever all the hopes of peaceful retreat; that precious reward of the toils of man; a happiness which has been often preferred even to glory, and is the ultimate wish of the philosopher? After having dedicated fifteen years to the service of our country, is it not reasonable to live at last for ourselves, and, breaking those honourable, but heavy chains, retire in solitude to find liberty and peace, the only real good this world affords?—

Almanzor. Who I, Jaffier? shall I prefer repose to the happiness of being useful in the cause of humanity? With the power of serving my country to the end of my course, shall I meanly abandon its interests? No, no; that sacred debt which I contracted with my country as my birth, cannot be discharged but by dedicating my whole life to its service; this is the station allotted me by heaven, that has deigned to preserve to me an uncor-

rupted mind, even in this place, where undoubtedly I ought to remain. Doth not Providence, in bestowing the friendship of a sovereign upon a man of truth and honour, seem to impose upon him the obligation of cultivating it to the last, for his own glory and the happiness of the human race? And are ten years of the most agreeable repose to be compared with the delicious satisfaction of preventing even one act of injustice? O Jaffier, for a noble and a feeling heart, how glorious and important is the place which I at present occupy! What an exalted employment is that of forming the principles and character of a sovereign, who is one day to reign over a whole people! Every just idea which I communicate to my pupil, every virtue which I impress upon his young heart, are so many benefits which I diffuse over my country; it is my country that must reap the happy fruit of all my cares and vigilance. What must my transports be, if in my old age I can say to myself, 'Vathek is good and just; 'tis to him his people owe their happiness; and his success, his glory, and his virtues, are the work of my hands!'—

Jaffier. Well, my dear Almanzor, for the happiness of that country which is so dear to you, let me advise you to fear lest envy should wrest from you the favour and credit which you at present enjoy. Do not despise my advice; but be assured that some black conspiracy is meditating against you.—

Almanzor. Being certain it is always in my power to justify myself, what accusation have I to dread?

Jaffier. At least let me beg of you to be more prudent: for example, why do you allow Osmyn to converse with the young Prince in private? Osmyn is the son of the Vizier; you have just refused Zulica to him: and you may expect that he will use every effort to injure you in the mind of the Prince.—

Almanzor. That will be a vain attempt.—I can depend upon the heart of Vathek. I think as you do, that Osmyn, guided by his father, is attempting to make a tool of Vathek; I observed that he was desirous to have a conversation with him in secret.

Jaffier.

Jaffier. And have you left them together?

Almanzor. Yes, that I may discover this mystery ; for certainly Vathek will inform me.

Jaffier. You depend too much upon your own virtue, Almanzor ; this confidence will prove your ruin.

Almanzor. No, never let a man of honour defend himself against intrigue by intrigue.—And after all, if they should supplant me, I shall have the testimony of my own conscience, and the recollection of what I have done for my consolation. With such a recompence, no disgrace can be oppressive, and no banishment rigorous.—But I hear somebody coming ; O, it is the Prince.

Jaffier. Notice, Osmyn still follows him.

Almanzor. Let us retire a little, and give them an opportunity of conversation.

SCENE II.

Almanzor, Jaffier, and Vathek.

Vathek, (to Almanzor.) Where are you going, Almanzor ?

Almanzor. I wish to give Osmyn an opportunity of talking with you apart, as I have observed him very anxious for an opportunity ever since morning ;—I will therefore retire into the great gallery.

Vathek. I will very soon be with you.

[*Almanzor and Jaffier go out.*]

SCENE III.

Vathek and Osmyn.

Osmyn. I assure you, my Lord, my father did not inform me of his intention to ask Zulica for me ; and when I heard of his refusal, I never doubted it was on your account ; and as I knew how much you loved, I judged it most prudent to let it be known : and the event has justified my expectations. My father is your friend, and

will exert all his influence with your father to complete your wishes ; so you have the most solid ground to hope the best. Why then are you so much dispirited and melancholy ?

Vathek. It is on your account ; for that confidence you obtained from me is not voluntary. Yesterday you wrested from me the secret of my passion for Zulica ; this day, being persuaded that you was my rival, and guilty of the blackest perfidy, rage and resentment made me desirous of an explanation : you have satisfied me, Osmyr ; you are justified ; I have acknowledged my injustice towards you ; but I am chiefly sorry for having accused you of dissimulation in the presence of my father ; the injury I have done you gives you a particular title to my friendship ; but still, Osmyr, it is against my inclination that you know all my secrets ; and I own to you, I feel some remorse for having intrusted you with what I was afraid to tell Almanzor. It is to him alone I owe an entire confidence, since 'tis he only who can instruct and guide me.

Osmyr. This delicacy, my Lord, is worthy of you : but you have no occasion to reproach yourself ; for you may depend upon it, Almanzor has read it in your heart.

Vathek. I believe so too——And do you think it possible that he should favour me ?

Osmyr. Does not this conduct prove it ?

Vathek. That is true.——With what steadiness he rejected the Vizier's offer, notwithstanding the dissatisfaction so visible in my father, and, without assigning any reason for so extraordinary a refusal !——I even recollect that his manner was constrained and embarrassed.——O Zulica, can it be possible !——Alas ! the idea of what I must suffer, if I am to sacrifice this pleasing error, that cruel apprehension deprives me of all the charms which hope can give ! Ah, I must see Almanzor ; I will advise with him.——

Osmyr. Take care how you do that, my Lord ; you will lose Zulica irrecoverably.

Vathek.

Vathek. And why so?

Osmyn. Almanzor cannot act agreeable to your wishes; he has plainly shown that he approves your passion; the father of Zulica favours it in secret; but the governor of the Prince must condemn it; he avoids being in your confidence, because he must be obliged to advise you contrary to your passion.

Vathek. Very true; else why should he always so carefully decline speaking to me of Zulica?—Yet I cannot think that Almanzor has so much indulgence for a weakness.—Osmyn, if you suspect him of ambition, you do him great injustice.

Osmyn. I suspect Almanzor of ambition! My Lord, I know his character well, and my father has often extolled to me that austere virtue by which it is distinguished.—

Vathek. Is the Vizier very sincere?

Osmyn. Yes, my Lord, he admires, he loves Almanzor.

Vathek. He was formerly his enemy.

Osmyn. But, my Lord, he this day demanded Zulica in marriage; and this evening he has given me his promise to serve you.—

Vathek. Almanzor will not consent.

Osmyn. My Lord, Almanzor is a philosopher, superior to vulgar prejudices; and sees in Zulica all those qualities which can render you happy. It is not from ambition that he wishes her to be your wife, but to secure the happiness of your life; it is not his daughter that he wishes to raise to that high rank, but it is the person who, in his estimation, as well as ours, seems the most deserving of that honour.

Vathek. If Almanzor does not blame my passion, certainly these must be his motives and his sentiments. Well, my dear Osmyn, what shall I do? what part shall I take?

Osmyn. You must declare your love to the Caliph, my Lord.—

Vathek. To my father? I never shall have courage.

Osmyn. The Princess, his mother, loves Zulica; convinced, that she must always preserve the best founded claim

claim to her gratitude, she earnestly wishes her to be your wife ; and the Caliph will consult nobody but her and my father : so that—

Vathek. But are you certain that I may depend upon the Vizier ?

Osmyrn. If you cannot trust his promise, my Lord, you may depend upon its being his interest to serve you ; and by this single obligation, he will secure not only your favour, but likewise the favour of your wife, and the friendship of Almanzor.—

Vathek. You convince me—But, however, I cannot resolve to take such an important step without the knowledge of Almanzor.—

Osmyrn. My Lord, he cannot give his consent to it.—

Vathek. And if I excite my father's anger against him ?——

Osmyrn. If you act in concert with Almanzor, you may indeed provoke the Caliph ; but he will see nothing in your conduct but the natural effect of an insurmountable passion.—

Vathek. Well, I am resolved ; I will speak to him.—

Osmyrn. You may, my Lord, with the greater confidence, as he already suspects your love, and does not seem surprised at it.—

Vathek. How !

Osmyrn. It is not without design I led you hither, my Lord ; the Caliph is coming here.

Vathek. O heavens, Osmyrn ! how have you involved me !—Ah, let me consult Almanzor.—

Osmyrn. Well, go then, my Lord, I no longer desire to oppose you : perhaps, in fact, it is more prudent to renounce Zulica ; if that is your design, I am very far from dissuading you.

Vathek. Renounce her !—no, I cannot.—My father coming ; and will the Vizier be with him ?

Osmyrn. Yes, my Lord ; and I entreated my father to employ all his address to sound the Caliph, and to bring him hither.—

Vathek.

Vathek. O heavens !

Osmy. In short, my Lord, I have agreed upon a signal with my father, by which he can inform me of the disposition of the Caliph, on purpose either to encourage you to speak, or to dissuade you from it.—

Vathek. So then, I find I am entirely under your guidance !—

Osmy. I notice you weep, my Lord. If you disapprove of my scheme, abandon it ; perhaps it was rash ; if so, impute it to the indiscretion of my zeal.

Vathek. I shrink to meet Almanzor ! Also, I fear I am ruining myself and neglecting him.

Osmy. Let us go to him, my Lord.

Vathek. It is too late.

Osmy. Who is this coming ?

Vathek. My father ! O heavens !

Osmy. Determine, my Lord.

Vathek. I'll take your advice, *Osmy.* O Zulica !

—Watch carefully your father's motions.

Osmy. I will, my Lord.

SCENE IV.

Caliph, Vathek, Vizier, Osmy.

VATHEK, (aside.) I fear to speak.

Caliph, (aside to the Vizier.) I will keep in due bounds, I promise you.

Osmy, (aside to the Prince.) Speak, my Lord, my father gives the signal. Take courage. [*He retires.*]

Vathek, (aside.) O Almanzor, without your advice I can do nothing, what shall I do ?

Caliph. I observe, my son, *Osmy* has just been with you—It appears singular to me, that you should express so much dislike to him in company, and immediately thereafter be so familiar.

Vathek True, my Lord.

Caliph. From whence, then, does your anger against *Osmy* proceed ?

Vathek.

Vathek. My Lord, it is dispelled ; I have acknowledged my injustice.

Caliph. But what was the occasion ?

Vizier. Speak, my Lord ; speak with confidence, to the best of fathers.—

Vathek, (throwing himself at the feet of the Caliph.) Ah, my Lord, I implore your indulgence, your pity ! It is true, O my father, that I have presumed to yield to a passion which you undoubtedly disapprove.

Caliph. You love Zulica ?

Vathek. Yes, my Lord, I own it.

Caliph, (coldly.) Rise up.

Vathek, (aside.) What severity in his looks !—

Vizier, (aside.) At last the blow is struck ! my project succeeds.—

Caliph. You love Zulica !—And how long have you loved her ?

Vizier. Probably, from his infancy.

Vathek, (aside.) Undoubtedly the Vizier advises me to give that answer.—Alas, I do not know what to say !—

Caliph. Why don't you answer ?

Vathek. My Lord, I have loved her since I knew myself.

Vizier, (to the Caliph.) It must be owned, my Lord, that Zulica, by her charms, her virtues, and accomplishments, fully justifies the passion of the Prince ; it is said, that Almanzor has taken peculiar pains to form her understanding and her manners ; the Prince found in her all the instruction which he himself received ; for beauty alone could not have seduced him ; that triumph was reserved for the assemblage of all those extraordinary qualities with shine in Zulica.

Caliph. Go, my son, go and find Almanzor ; bring him hither ; I will explain my sentiments to you in his presence ; but I enjoin you to say nothing of my purpose.

Vathek. My Lord, I will obey.—But can I hope for pardon ?

Caliph.

Caliph. I have neither anger nor resentment against you.

Vathek. Alas, my Lord, may I speak it? your anger would perhaps less affect me than this distant and severe reserve.

Caliph. 'Tis enough. Go and find Almanzor.

Vathek, (aside.) Ah, I am ruined.—O my dear Almanzor, what have I done!—
[*He goes out.*]

SCENE V.

Caliph, Vizier.

Vizier. Well, my Lord, you see I am not deceived in my conjectures.—Notwithstanding my esteem for Almanzor, when my son informed me of the manner in which the young Prince behaved to him in his first emotions, I plainly perceived that love alone was the cause, and that this love was the work of Almanzor. You have heard the Prince declare he has loved Zulica from his infancy; Almanzor is too penetrating not to have observed it in a young heart which has been formed by himself; he has not opposed this growing passion, but, on the contrary, seems to have employed his whole attention to give it strength, and then with disdain rejects my alliance, without assigning any reason for his refusal: upon which the Prince, guided solely by him, acquaints you with his passion!—Is it possible after this to doubt of the ambition and rash projects of Almanzor?

Caliph. Spare yourself the trouble of collecting all these circumstances, they present themselves unsought-for to my mind. I expect Almanzor, and I will not judge him without a hearing.

Vizier. What can he say, my Lord, in his vindication?

Caliph. Whatever appearances may be, we ought to hear before we condemn; that is undoubtedly the first duty of him who has the power to punish. Did I not just now see Boulaski; did I not hear what he had to say?

say? Though I had seen the proof of his perfidy written with his own hand, yet the thought of its being possible that the character, might be forged, made me resolve to hear him; and, now that I have heard the confession of his guilt from his own mouth, my mind is at ease—Shall I do less for Almanzor, for a friend whom I have loved so long?—I, who would not slightly condemn only in my own mind the meanest of my subjects?—

Vizier. My Lord, I see that the excess of my zeal has only served to lead me astray. I imagined such information might be useful; but I have attended less to prudence than to my duty—Almanzor will deny that he knew of the Prince's passion, and—

Caliph. And you think it will be easy for him to impose upon me; you attack only my understanding, and have no apprehension but from the goodness of my heart: I pardon you without hesitation. But you may depend upon it, that if his defence rests only upon the pretended ignorance of my son's sentiments, I will not believe him, for I am certain he must have known them.

Vizier. Well, and what other reason can he give?

Caliph. I do not know; but in one word, I wish him to defend himself.—Here he comes.

Vizier. Shall I retire, my Lord?

Caliph. No, remain here.—It is he (*aside*.)—O God, if I am worthy of having a friend, may Almanzor be able to justify himself!

Vizier. I cannot help being disturbed at this explanation.

Caliph. Almanzor comes; I feel uneasy.

S C E N E VI.

Caliph, Vathek, Vizier, Almanzor.

VATHEK, (aside.) How shall I support myself?

Caliph. Has Vathek been communicating any thing to you, Almanzor?

Almanzor.

Almanzor. I have observed distress in his countenance, but to me he has been silent ; I hope, my Lord, you will favour me with an explanation.

Caliph. Is it possible, Almanzor, that you are at present undisturbed ?

Almanzor. You, my Lord, I observe in much agitation ; the prince in tears ; I doubt not there is some connivance to my prejudice, and probably I may conjecture what it is.—But, my Lord, before I offer to justify myself by facts, permit me to remind you, that for ten years Almanzor has been honoured with the title of your friend. Has not your own great soul, my Lord, justified me in secret ? Do you think it possible that an ambitious hypocrite could feign sincerity, moderation, and disinterestedness, for ten years together !—No, my Lord, I am not intimidated ; I shall only be surprised and afflicted if you can doubt my fidelity.

Caliph. No, I do not doubt ; no, my dear Almanzor.—I am not afraid to own to you, that I have been uneasy several times this day by a number of concurring circumstances, which seemed to depose against you : but still friendship overcame distrust ; and at this moment, convinced of your innocence, I only desire an explanation, that I may see your triumph in the eyes of the world.

Vizier, (aside.) I can scarce restrain myself.

Vathek. O my father !—

Caliph. Speak, then, my dear Almanzor.—My son loves Zulica ; he has acknowledged it to me.—

Almanzor. My Lord, I pray you pardon this imprudence, which has not originated with himself ; it is certainly the effect of bad counsels.—

Caliph. But was his love unknown to you ?

Almanzor. No, my Lord ; I have known it from the beginning.—

Vizier, (aside.) After this, what can he possibly say to vindicate himself ?—

Caliph. And you have refused Zulica to the son of the Vizier.—Almanzor, you may have your choice in my court of a husband for Zulica, and I desire her hand
for

for whomsoever you think most deserving ; but I insist upon your choice being declared this day.

Vatbek, (aside.) Ah heavens !—

Almanzor. My Lord, it is impossible for me to obey.

Vatbek, (aside.) What do I hear !—

Vizier, (low to the Caliph.) Well, my Lord, does not this excessive presumption open your eyes ?

Caliph, (after a short silence.) Yes, friendship informs me—Almanzor has discharged his duty ; Zulica is no longer free.—

Almanzor, (throwing himself at the Caliph's feet.) O thou best of Princes ! when every appearance was against me, you alone have the penetration to see into the truth which justifies me !—

Vizier. How is this !

Vatbek. What ! Zulica ?

Almanzor. Zulica has been privately married to Nadir, the son of Jaffier, these two months.

Vatbek. O Heavens !

Caliph. Dear Almanzor.

Vatbek, (aside.) What an unexpected stroke !

Caliph. Ah ! My son !—he turns pale, he staggers.—

Almanzor, (supporting him in his arms.) Ah, my Lord !

Vatbek, (to Almanzor.) Cruel man, leave me !

Almanzor, (to Vatbek.) What, my Lord, would you by a shameful weakness disappoint the hopes I have conceived from your growing virtues ?—Can that which justifies me, occasion despair in you ? Is love stronger in your heart than friendship, than gratitude ? Yes, gratitude, my Lord, I dare repeat it, 'tis what you owe me : a boundless attachment should inspire such a sentiment.

Vatbek. Almanzor, if I can acquit myself by loving you, you will have no cause to reproach me ; but give me leave at least to shed those tears I can no longer restrain.

Vizier. To conclude all ; Almanzor, know your accuser ; it was I who believed you guilty—it was I who impeached you.

Vatbek, (aside.) What perfidy !

Almanzor, (to the Vizier.) You did your duty.

Caliph. And I will do mine.—But, Almanzor, proceed

ceed and satisfy my curiosity ; why did you conceal from me the marriage of Zulica ?

Almanzor. My Lord, the Princess your mother desired I would spare you the vexation of making you acquainted with the Prince's weakness. You left me absolute master of the destiny of my daughter. For a long time I was resolved to give her to Nadir ; and as he has but little fortune, I own I was afraid that your kindness to me would make you disapprove of the match : but so soon as I perceived the error of the Prince, I caused Nadir to return privately ; he married Zulica, and immediately departed. Regard for the Prince made me think it would be proper to conceal the marriage for some time ; Zulica was soon to have followed her husband, but her departure was delayed by the illness of the Princess your mother : however, a day was at last fixed : we had found a pretence for her journey ; and I proposed, after some months absence, to declare the truth.

Caliph. But, my son, you told me that you loved Zulica from your infancy ?

Vathek. My Lord, I will no longer conceal any thing from you : I thought the Vizier was in my interest ; but he exasperated you, and deceived me.——

Vizier. My Lord !——

Vathek, (to the Vizier.) At least spare your interruption.—I only mean that you should be known ; I might perhaps have been desirous of another kind of vengeance, but you have nothing to fear ; Almanzor has taught me to pardon treachery, and nothing was wanting to his glory but to see me generous. You may be easy ; that single idea has the most powerful effect upon me, and shall guard me from anger and resentment.

Vizier, (aside.) This is too much, I cannot endure such contempt !—*He moves some steps to go away.*

Caliph, (to the Vizier.) Stop and hear him ; you shall answer afterwards.

Vizier, (aside.) What terrible constraint !

Vathek. Deceived by an artful question from the Vizier, which I imagined was intended as advice, I told you,

you, my Lord, that I had loved Zulica from my infancy; and without knowing it, I, by this answer, made Almanzor appear more guilty in your eyes: but this unhappy passion is only of three months standing; and it was Osmyn the son of the Vizier who first made me know it; if it had not been for him, perhaps I should never have ventured to own it to myself. Osmyn always praising Zulica, speaking of nothing but her charms and her virtues, let me know that he suspected my sentiments. I heard him at first with indifference, then with perplexity, but afterwards his discourse gave me inexpressible disquiet. He taught me to know that I was in love; he did still more, he extorted from me the confession of it. Yesterday, being overcome by his importunity, I intrusted him with that unhappy secret, which he was anxious to obtain for no purpose but immediately to reveal it. In short, this very day, my Lord, he pressed me most earnestly to declare my sentiments to you, persuading me to conceal this proceeding from Almanzor, and at the same time promising that the Vizier should support me with all his credit. This my Lord, is the exact truth.

Caliph. I observe, my son, that the insinuations of Osmyn have been the principal cause of your weakness. It is in this manner that courtiers frequently flatter the passions of Princes, and even are the cause of them, that they may either become their confidants, or secure their own success in some secret intrigue.

Vizier, (to the Caliph.) My Lord, I plainly foresee my disgrace; deign to declare your pleasure; I am prepared to meet my fate, and hope at least to suffer with courage.

Almanzor, (to the Caliph.) Ah, my Lord, think of the services of the Vizier; recollect that his valour has more than once been useful to the state; he has shed his blood for you; he has discharged the duties of the employment with which you have honoured him, most nobly; shall his particular dislike of one man, annihilate the merit of so many illustrious actions in your eyes?
What

What is it to the state that the Vizier hates Almanzor?—Besides, his hatred was only founded in error: he thought me capable of mad ambition; but in time he will know, my Lord, that the reputation of being a man of honour, and the friendship of such a Prince as you, is sufficient to gratify the ambition of an elevated mind. But my zeal transports and misleads me; it has made me for a moment forget that I am speaking to the most equitable and enlightened of Princes, and that to him such counsels are unnecessary.

Caliph, (addressing the Vizier.) Hear what has ever been Almanzor's language even in the midst of your animosity against him; and thus it is that his generosity, honour and virtue, constantly procure him the most ample vengeance on his enemies. Your services to me have been faithful, and merit acknowledgements, therefore continue your employment; and if it is your ambition to be a favourite of your Prince, pursue the steps of Almanzor: 'tis by such conduct as his only, that real honour is to be attained—And for you Vathek, attend your mother, convince her you have a spirit above your age; the result of Almanzor's care. See also Zulica; take leave of her, and esteem the valuable husband, to whom she is wedded; and thus, by a noble victory of your youthful passions, shew you was born to *Reign*.

Vathek. I will, my Lord; such language animates me; the virtuous precepts you inculcate inspire me! How despicable should I be in my own eyes, if, between my father and Almanzor, I should be either deficient in benevolence or honour—I will wait on Zulica, as becomes me, and esteem, nay, love her worthy husband, whose happiness I dare not envy. Shall I envy my friend, who has ever spoken to me the unmasked language of friendship and truth? I am anxious to attend you, my Lord.

Caliph. Come along then, Vathek; come worthy Almanzor.

Vathek. (aside.) I will at least evidence, even to you, Zulica, that I was not unworthy of you!

[*They go out.*]

SCENE

S C E N E VII.

Vizier, alone, pausing a little.

Thus, then, all the fruits of thy intriguing policy, have been to afford Almanzor a more glorious victory— Shall honesty, undisguised, unsuspecting honesty, ever defeat the deepest plans of villainy? and is honour, the only true source of happiness—I must go in search of Osmyn, whom I have ruined with the Prince—I trust this affair will effectually teach him as it has me, that the man of honour, rectitude and virtue, never fails to defeat all the machinations of malice, envy, hatred, cunning and intrigue.

[*He goes out.*]

T H E
C A S T L E O F T R U T H,
A
M O R A L T A L E.

F R O M
T H E T A L E S O F T H E C A S T L E.

THE beautiful Queen Altemira married Phanor, the most amiable and handsome of the Genii.—She was very importunate with the Genius to conduct her to his Castle the evening they were married. Phanor sighed, and looking tenderly on the Queen replied, I for ever forsake it on your account. It is not in my power to conduct you to my palace; but as you cannot live there, I for ever abandon it. Reign as sovereign of my heart, and your own faithful subjects: be satisfied with that empire, and question me no farther.

And shall I never see your Castle, my Lord?

I really hope, said Phanor, the day will come when you may see it with safety.

O! when! replied Altemira, keenly.

You may, in sixteen years, if you are then anxious.

Sixteen years! O heavens!

Let me beg of you, both for your quiet and mine, to think no more of it till that time.

Altemira

Altemira was very anxious, reflected, complained and wept, but Phanor would not yield——They loved each other sincerely, and all the unhappiness Altemira knew was a *prudent husband*; indeed had it not been for her perpetual questioning about the Castle, they would have lived very comfortably.

The Queen was happily delivered of a Princess, who was endowed with every qualification possible, by her father the Genius, and named Zeolide. She was uncommonly lovely, and was scarcely fourteen years of age when her parents chose her a future husband, who should be worthy of so accomplished a Princess, the Prince Philamir, who adored her.—They consulted Zeolide, who declared she loved the Prince, above all who had ever sought her.

The time was now at hand, when Altemira was to have her curiosity indulged, to which she looked forward with much impatience, and resolved her daughter should not be married till her return from the Castle.

They had been sixteen years married, and she intreated her husband to set off immediately.—You shall this evening hear my story, and if you then continue in the same mind, to-morrow you shall be transported thither. Altemira wished her daughter to be present, and Phanor, though unwilling, consented, and being sat between the two Princesses in Altemira's apartment, he thus began.

THE
HISTORY
OF
PHANOR,
THE
GENIUS.

HOWEVER superior to mortals our art may render us, it can make no impression on the heart; I was born with uncommonly strong passions, and my father saw, with regret, that I would never be discreet nor happy, without some centuries experience.

Mean time I fell in love with a fairy called Prudina, who was highly esteemed for her prudence, virtue and circumspection; she was by much my elder; and was valued more for her knowledge than beauty; this attachment did me honour: she discovered it first herself, and told me of it; I could not believe it, and was preparing to deny it, when observing she seemed certain, I thought it best to delay and examine myself.

Prudina then began to chide me for a passion which she termed childish and foolish, but did it with so much tenderness, that she only shewed me by her lectures, there was a possibility of gaining a place in her affections; and thus the love she anticipated became real. I declared my feelings, and my love was returned. Animated by this, I hinted marriage, which she declined till she had proved me; engaging at same time not to tattle, and requiring a like promise of me; thus we loved and nobody knew.

As I one night was travelling through the Air to Prudina's Castle, cries of a very pitiable sort reached my ears, and made me stop; when looking around, I observed a youth, surrounded by his Slaves bearing torches, who seemed racked with dreadful agonies; his attendants were numerous in carriages and on horseback; and they re-echoed his complainings, which heightened the terror of the scene. I approached them, and expressed a wish to be made acquainted with the cause of their distress. You behold, said the young man, the Prince Zimis, celebrated for his love to the Princess Eliana; with whom I would have been married, had not Phormidas, that cruel Genius, become deeply enamoured of Eliana. She hated him, and he began to despair. Seizing this favourable opportunity, I set out with my Princess and their attendants for my own kingdom to celebrate our nuptials.

Just as we had entered a dismal forest, Phormidas attacked us, and tore my charming Eliana from my arms. These three days past I have been in vain endeavouring to trace the Ravisher, and here I stop, overcome with fatigue and despair, waiting the end of my unhappy days.

Distressed with the miseries of this unhappy Prince, I did all in my power to comfort him. I told him how much I was interested in his distresses; that my power was superior to that of Phormidas; I entreated him to retire to his own kingdom, where he should be again happy with Eliana before break of day. So saying, I left Zimis and his Train, and rushed into the air, to spend the night in avenging the oppressed, which I had dedicated to Love. I darted with amazing velocity to the Royal Palace of the king of the Genii, acquainted him with the melancholy story, and begged his assistance to restore Eliana to the arms of her lover.

Our Sovereign took me by the hand, and told me, he would give to me the honour of this adventure, and for that purpose would inform me of other particulars. Then leading me into a superb saloon, ornamented with

an

an infinitude of glasses, we must enquire, said he, into her present situation, that we may adapt our assistance to the emergency of the case: then touching one of the glasses with a golden wand, a Lady of perfect beauty appeared: notice, said he, in what situation she is. Presently the picture was completed, and I observed Eliana in a garden alone, overcome with grief, sitting in a swing, which at times reached almost to the clouds. Her condition distressed me. The Genius smiled; then mysteriously shaking his head, you will see what will afflict you more. He then gave me a Talisman, by means of which I might transport myself into the presence of Eliana whenever I pleased; but said he, be prudent, cool and courageous, and if you complete this perilous undertaking gloriously, you shall name your own reward.

When he had so said he left me with my Talisman, and I instantly wished myself with Eliana; immediately I was in a garden, heard voices, looked about, and by the light of the moon, which shone uncommonly bright, I saw at some distance the same Eliana I had seen in the glass; and what astonished me much, she was in the very same posture, swinging with the utmost force.

A little sylph who stood by her thus addressed her. It does well enough to swing a little now and then, but to be swinging, swinging, swinging constantly thus, is harsh, I think. How happy are you Zumio, replied the Princess, that can thus support your spirits, you are also a slave as well as me, but not treated with half the barbarity—Oh to what a ridiculous punishment am I condemned—Barbarous Genius—more barbarous Fairy——Here she was obliged to stop, for now, her swinging was increased to such a pitch, that she could not fetch her breath.

I now understood, the unhappy Eliana was enchanted in this distressing swing. I approached her, proffered my services, acquainted her with the situation of her lover, engaged to restore her to her freedom; and begged she would freely communicate all that had happened her. Alas! Alas! said she, my Lord, Revenge and Jealousy

have invented an enchantment, which I fear you will not be able to break ; so cruel, so distressing are the terms which must first be fulfilled.

My Story, continued she, is shortly this ; having been separated from my husband, by the cruel Phormidas, I was instantly carried to his Castle. I endeavoured to put an end to my wretched existence, and would certainly have done something fatal to my life had not the Castle opened at the roof, and a Lady, or rather Fairy, made her appearance, riding in an ebony car drawn by four dreadful bats.—Phormidas was just then prostrate before me ; but immediately rose in great confusion : The Furious Fairy, assuming a most imperious and terrible voice, spoke in the following manner :

And do you thus betray me, perfidious wretch ? Do you thus, vile ingrate, prefer a mortal to *Me*, who, on thy account have forsaken the most handsome of all the Genii ? But, you shall not deceive me, and if you expect forgiveness, surrender to me the Princess, whom I will punish, and at same time preserve her life. Keep in mind, if you refuse, that I am capable of much indeed to be *revenged* ; I adore, while she abhors thee.

The affrighted Genius, kissed his chains, and submissively surrendered me to the Fairy. She took me into her car, which ascending through the clouds, in less than three minutes brought us here. I then prostrated myself before her, intreated her compassion, begged she would restore me to Zimis, and used every argument in my power to assuage her fury. She hesitated a little, then raised me, with these words, I am not, princess, revengeful, but whimsical ; and if you will indulge me in a certain humour, which I have just taken into my head, all that has passed will be forgiven. I have a singular predilection for swinging, sit down in this swing——The thought appeared to me ridiculous, but still it was an easy atonement, and I sat down very well pleased ; but I was no sooner seated, than the Fairy, with a terrible voice, thus addressed me :

Swing

Swing here without ceasing for thirty years, unless one of my lovers shall within that time prove fickle without my knowing it.

At that moment the Swing began to swing so violently that I instantly swooned away; Zumio, the little sylph you just now spoke with, run to my assistance and with trouble recovered me; at first I gave up myself to despair, but I soon became calm, when I reflected, that from what she said, it was evident she had lovers, and it would be strange indeed, if none of them deceived her.

There is no doubt, replied Zumio, were it not for that valuable turquoise ring she possesses, which, so soon as any of her lovers cease to admire her, or are in any degree unfaithful, turns as yellow as gold. - By day, the Fairy constantly wears this ring; and lest it should be stolen while she sleeps, it is enclosed in a casket of brass, every night, and is deposited in a grot dug in her garden, the gate of which is guarded by twelve terrible Crocodiles, six Basilisks and four Dragons, who emit large stones of fire and spue out scorching flames from their terrible jaws. If you then, my lord, continued Zumio, undertake the glorious enterprise, consider what dangers await you: but if you prove victorious, how glorious the achievement? how important in its consequences? when you are informed that all these surrounding gardens are filled with beautiful princesses and ladies, who are here enchanted and condemned to dreadful and tormenting punishments by the Jealous Fairy. For her barbarity has not been confined to rivals only, but all who have given her umbrage have shared the same fate; and she is the enemy of all, who are remarkable for beauty, wit, virtue and other valuable accomplishments. For my own part, I was once her most admired page; I carried her most private letters and billets-doux; unluckily, I became the object of her suspicion, and am now her prisoner.

Heavens! cried I, interrupting Zumio, what is her infamous name; tell me, O tell me, the name of such a monster.

Alas, my lord, replied Zumio, her hypocrisy is as remarkable as her wickedness. She is adored by the Genii and supposed to be the most virtuous of her tribe—How will you be astonished to hear—her name is—*Prudina*. Amazed I left them precipitately, and by means of my Talisman, was instantly at the gate of this well defended cavern. It would be tiresome to you to repeat the obstacles I surmounted, suffice it, that prompted by every noble, every animating principle, and incited by rage, malice and hatred, I overcame, and that only because being a Genius I was immortal. The monsters I vanquished; I tore down the gates and reduced them to powder; and then snatched the casket, with its precious contents. The ring was a beautiful citron-colour; so placing it on my finger, I swore it should never be removed.

The instant I had done so, the garden re-echoed from a thousand voices, the joyful acclamations of *Liberty! Liberty! grateful thanks to Phanor! Freedom! Liberty!*

Immediately I left the Grotto, and found the garden filled with young and beautiful ladies, differently dressed, who were running about embracing and congratulating one another, while they repeated with loud voices, *Thanks to the Genius Phanor! Liberty! Liberty!* As the day began to break, I soon discovered, leaning on the arm of the little Sylph, the incomparable Eliana. Observing me she ran towards me, exclaiming, see, see, our brave deliverer! immediately her companions followed her example, some madly kissing me, some hugging me in their arms, some clasping my knees, and others seizing me by the hands and arms. One more frantic than the rest, leapt upon my back, and with a shrill voice sounded in my ear the words *Liberty, Liberty*. This disturbing exclamation, was continued so long and so violently, that I was almost stunned with the noise when the Sovereign of the Genii himself approached, mounted on a white Elephant; he instantly ordered the noisy company to be silent, and addressed me thus. It belongs to you
Phanor,

Phanor, to give sentence on Prudina, as the Sole Ruler of her fate.

Her character, Gracious Sire, replied I, is unveiled; which is sufficient Revenge, but I intreat in behalf of these her unfortunate victims, whom I recommend to your pity; command them to be transported each to their native country, their friends, their Lovers, or where their hearts wish.

Immediately, the Genius raised his sceptre and they all vanished; now said he, turning to me, I engaged to perform whatever you wished as a reward, and I will fulfil; but let me advise you to consider well, before you determine, and when you have done so, come to me.

Having thus said, he left me; I accordingly resolved immediately to quit a place, which only furnished me with gloomy reflections, when I accidentally observed the little sylph, Zumio, conversing at the back of a tree, with one of the most beautiful women I had ever seen. I was greatly astonished; when he came up to me and told me, he was determined to cleave to me at all hazards, and therefore had not left the Garden. This beautiful Lady, said he, will tell you her own history, if you incline. Undoubtedly, replied I.

She smiled assent; and sitting down by her, I entreated her to communicate freely, what had determined her to remain there.

My Lord, said she, the other Ladies have all Lovers or Husbands; I, neither. Their fidelity, I approve; but cannot follow. But as you wish to hear an account of my adventures, I shall certainly attempt it.

THE HISTORY OF AGELIA.

MY heart is uncommonly tender, and my imagination lively; I have a great share of sensibility and delicacy, so I am easily captivated, but hard to fix. When

I am first enraptured, I view every thing in the favourable way, and not only adore my lover, but deify him ; when accident or peculiar circumstances expose the reality, I find I have been carried away by delusion ; and appear as one arising from a pleasant dream, which vanishes leaving nothing solid. This effort of reason mankind call inconstancy, yet with me it is the effect of deception, not satiety or whim.

It was my misfortune, about two years since, to become the rival of Prudina ; I had been for three months the favourite of a youth, to whom she took a fancy ; this ended in my confinement ; I was transported hither, and while she led me by the hand across the garden, I gave place to the keenest anguish. Agelia, said she, be not so terrified, I will not be harsh ; your appearance pleases me, and were it not for that air of inconstancy, and fickleness, you would delight me : I will therefore make it more my study to amend than chastise you, for you have interested me much in your behalf. I was not however imposed on by her pretences. We walked on, from garden to bower, and from bower to grove, till at length not a tree was to be seen ; we were in a wide extended plain, bounded by the surrounding horizon. The prospect was something like a sea scene, were it not, that the noise of the waves, the motion of the ship, and the reflection of the sun beams on the water, animate this picture ; while where we were, there was nothing to relieve the mind under the astonishing uniformity of the plain around us. No shrub, flower, nor herb was to be seen, but a beautiful short grass, all of one species. An universal calm and profound silence reigned throughout this vast solitude ; and not an insect or bird was to be seen, nay not a cloud to vary ever so little the uniform blueness of the sky. At first this view rather produced an agreeable feeling ; I was transported with admiration and rapture. It delights me, said Prudina, to perceive the scene pleases you ; it is calculated to soften the vigorous sallies of your imagination, though time and reflection will be necessary to complete it, I therefore propose

pose that you should remain here, where no variation will disturb you; the sky will be always serene, never cloudy, no alteration of day and night, no inclemency of seasons, perpetual day will ever charm you.

When she had thus spoken, she ordained me to walk with a stately noble step, around this lawn, for thirty years, unless, said she, one of my lovers shall within that time prove fickle without my knowing it. Having thus said, she vanished; and I found myself compelled to walk at a slow steady pace, not having it in my power to turn to the one hand or the other, of stopping or sitting down to rest.

At first the idea of this constant walk at the same pace I found very disagreeable, but I did not then know the extent of my punishment. I beheld the inconceivably rich and extensive carpet, surrounded by a clear and pleasant horizon, with rapture. Can it be, said I, that grass and sky, green and blue, can furnish so remarkable and striking a prospect! Thus it is that the sublime is formed by grandeur and simplicity.

The fresh idea of my lover, the expectation that the fairy might be imposed upon without her knowledge, and such like philosophic raptures as the above, soiced me for a few hours. But this rapture soon cooled, disgust took place of extasies, the boundless extent of never ceasing verdure, which ravished me so much, soon became tiresome, loathsome and insipid; no variety, nothing to attract my attention, the recollection of unfortunate love was all the object of my thoughts; and even this by degrees was effaced.

Fatigued fancy soon lost all its strength, my wandering ideas became undetermined; my fanciful hopes forsook me; even my passion itself took the flight, and thus was I alone in this almost incomprehensible expanse. When a dangerous mistake is rectified by reason, to subdue it brings comfort and we are happy. But however noble and praise-worthy it may be to subdue our passions, there is something truly disheartening in them quitting us; the imagination is in some degree annihilated and the heart

faded. Passions must either be conquered by reason or vanquished by time.

Thus painfully situated I traversed my endless road. My tears forsook me, I had not even strength enough of mind to be afflicted, but I became dispirited, so gaping about I gave place to unbearable weariness; the only real object of desire which I felt in my mind was once more to have a prospect of animated nature; a shrub, a hill or a dwelling would have ravished me; thundering, rain, storms, wind, nay a cloud, would have afforded an agreeable sensation. The very absence of night, the moon and stars, were grating to me; in short, any change of any sort was at this time my idea of happiness. Now it was that I experienced that Prudina could not have taken a more effectual method to punish my levity and inconstancy, than this ingenious device.

You will therefore easily conceive, my lord, that summit of joy to which I was raised, when I, thanks to your valour, found myself enabled to walk fast or slow, to sit down or rise up, and in the midst of this garden. My lover has surely now forgotten me, by eighteen months absence; and if he has not, how can I possibly endure his never ceasing complaints; all countries and climes are therefore equal to me, for I wish not to return to my own: and I care not where I spend my days if I am not doomed to vast plains or boundless lawns.

Agella having thus finished her history, I arose, and with my wand, describing a circle in the air, transformed the palace and gardens of the fairy, into a superb palace, situated on the top of a hill, and found ourselves standing on the terrace, which commanded a most delightful prospect. The view of rocks, water-falls, precipices, villages, flocks and herds, and the sea, quite transported the happy Agella; for all the pleasing and majestic objects of nature were united, but no plains. There, said I to Agella, you are Queen; and if you wish me gone, speak the word, and however great the sacrifice, you shall be obeyed; for my happiness is to see you satisfied.

Her

Her reply at first was tender and perplexed; but she soon resumed her accustomed gaiety and was uncommonly pleasant throughout the day: towards night, she fell into a kind of languid melancholy, which added to her charms, and made her so beautiful that I lost my heart irrecoverably.

I conducted her to the terrace after supper, where the prospect of the star-bedizzened sky amazed her; she trembled, and gaped up in rapture. Oh, cried she, what an amazing spectacle!

Falling at her knees, I ventured to confess my admiration and love. She heard me attentively, and was affected, she wept, I pressed her for an answer. Having paused a little and wiped off her tears, Phanor, said she, I sensibly feel your kindness, and your tender behaviour, but give me time to look into mine own heart, and to know more of yours. And then left me.

I instantly examined my turquoise ring and to my great joy found that she loved me. The day following I pressed still more urgently for an answer. I dread, says she, lest I should impose both on you and myself.

Fear not, my beauteous Agelia, said I in a rapture, and prostrating myself before her, I know I am beloved; I cannot doubt my happiness—at these words I ceased, perceiving in Agelia's looks, that she considered my certainty as presumptuous; and in truth, it had a vain appearance. She appeared reserved, and treated me somewhat disdainfully. I found it necessary to be more prudent, and assumed a tone of despair. Agella softened, and in a little time acknowledged I had gained her heart; the day, the happy day was fixed, when two hearts so suddenly cemented by love were to be still more closely united at the altar of Hymen.

I was walking on the terrace with Agelia on the evening preceding the wished for day; she fixed her eyes on the ocean which washed the palace walls, I had remarked that for two days past she had appeared more absent and much less enraptured than formerly, yet my ring retained its usual colour, and her appearance of consequence

sequence distressed me the less. Pausing a little, she turns to me. Cannot you, said she, with whom almost every thing is possible, make these rocks and mountains disappear; for the prospect is quite overloaded, and the eye has no relief; you have too much water; those dreadful rocks terrify the mind, and it is painful to hear the roarings of the sea.

And have these Landscapes, in which you so much delighted formerly, wearied you, my Agelia, said I; since that is your will then, they also shall disappear, however highly I value them; and they are dear to me indeed, since it was here, you first promised to be mine.

She made me no answer, but gave me her hand, with a look of mildness and love: I kissed it with rapture. She at this moment, cast her eye upon my ring, and with a seemingly careless air, pulled it off my finger. This rather startled me, however, fearful to raise her suspicion, I suffered her to examine it more closely.

This ring is of a beautiful colour, said she, but I hate turquoise; Oh fie! it is badly mounted; I dislike it much; and with these words, she raised her arm and cast it into the sea, without allowing me time to suspect her intention, much less to preserve what I considered as a most valuable treasure.

I stood fixed with surprise; and Agelia looked at me with a certain sort of mischievous delight which provoked me;—I restrained myself a little, but soon gave vent to every reproach which could be incited by the most violent rage and passion. She looked at me with great composure. Having heard me to an end, I acknowledge said she, the secret qualities of your ring I have been informed of. A suspicion of it has hung about me some days, and Zumio satisfied me. Infamous Zumio, I exclaimed!

I made him believe I was in the secret, and led him on to betray you; he has been prudent enough; but like many others outwitted by a woman; for human wisdom, penetration, nor philosophy have not yet discovered an antidote for female powers, and this, even Genii themselves

selves have experienced. But, my Lord, if your distress at losing this turquoise is on my account, it is vain, for I am not in the least degree disposed to deceive you.

But why, cruel woman, have you deprived me of this valuable ring; which would have prevented all doubts, and rendered protestations useless?

But, my lord, I delight in talking, now the ring left me nothing to chatter about; and you yourself must acknowledge that such a bond, was not paying me a compliment. How generous, noble and delicate would it have been, after I had been pouring out my love-sick effusions into your bosom, for you to sneak into a corner and demand confirmation from your ring? You say you love me; I believe you, without a ring. I will explain love to you. Whenever I confessed my love to you, you should have taken this villainous Talisman, this high-prized treasure, and cast it for ever from you, saying, *This is now useless, since I am so well assured of her love.*

I heard her out with amazement; then falling on my knees, I entreated her forbearance and pardon.

Forbearance! exclaimed she, you are insensible of its worth; the injuries you have just mentioned, did I not forgive? and when I cast your ring into the sea, could you not recollect, that it had not changed its colour; but your rage, that unworthy passion you just now vented—

O my Agelia, have patience, you harrow up my soul. You cannot now, my Lord, dive into my heart as before, but I will not even now deceive you; my word is far more to be depended on than any ring—Hear me then, and believe me—*I love you not, nor ever shall.*

These words she pronounced so steadily and coolly, that they left me no room to question their reality. My love for her was of the most fervent kind; this misfortune I could not support, I gave place to despair. Falling at her feet, I bedewed them with my tears, and besought her, to leave me only a gleam of hope.

Let

Let this teach you, said she, the value of your ring, you cannot bear the truth, and therefore intreat me to deceive you—It is very proper to endeavour to remove fantasies which disturb or distress us, but why should we those, that amuse and comfort us? Take an advice from me, my lord; and by all means be on your guard in future, never to apply your attention in constructing a Talifinan like that from which I have relieved you; for when you do, depend upon it, you are but constructing fresh torments. Be on your guard against men, and be jealous of them, but never let your friend or mistress be suspected.

Her advice was a good one, but as my misfortunes were not yet at an end, I disregarded it. Nothing would have effect on Agelia, she continued unmoved; and I found it necessary to leave her, overwhelmed with despair, and spent some months at a distance from her, where I gave full vent to my grief. I was attended here, by Zumio, who was so much attached to me, so cheerful and gentle, that I forgot he was the undesigning source of my misery, and made him my constant companion; besides I could talk to him of Agelia.

Zumio entertained me from time to time with accounts of his travels, for he had seen much of the world, and told his story gracefully. Among other things he frequently talked to me of a Princess, he named Arpalisa, of whom he said so many fine things, that he raised my curiosity about her—Is she as handsome as Agelia, said I?

As handsome as Agelia! replied Zumio, in derision; you had never fallen in love with her, had you seen Arpalisa; Agelia is pleasant and agreeable enough, with a little dash of wit at times; but at best she is whimsical to an extreme, wild and uncommonly thoughtless; it is foolish to compare her with Arpalisa, who is a most complete model of perfection; her beauty dazzling; the depth of her understanding astonishing; her accomplishments, virtues, greatness of soul, sensibility and extent
of

of knowledge would enchant you—Oh, did you hear her discourse on friendship!

There was no stopping of Zumio, when he began to talk of Arpalisa; till at length the daily hearing so much of her, gave a great inclination to see this wonderful Princess.

In spite of all Agelia had said, I could not help regretting the want of the ring: I had still my reward to ask from the sovereign of the Genii; so after much uncertainty and many resolutions I at length went to him, and asked him to construct me a castle, into which whoever entered, should be compelled by a secret charm, to speak whatever were their secret thoughts; while, I myself only, as possessor of the Castle, should have an exemption from the general law: for, Discretion, said I, is necessary for a lover, and I would not wish to expose myself to act improperly. I besought the sovereign, that in the Castle, I might hear the language of sincerity; see things as they really are: and those who speak should speak their real thoughts; I intreated, that those who wished to deceive, might not be sensible of their saying the very contrary of their meaning; that they should not hear themselves, but suppose they really expressed that flattery with which they meant to impose on others—This double charm was absolutely necessary, otherwise many would keep silence.

Rash thoughtless Phanor, replied the Genius, what an imprudent request?—My oath is however sacred; therefore go to your own place, and in place of the house you have formerly possessed, that which you have desired will be in its room. I have here a box for you, which will preserve you from its dangerous laws; preserve it, and you will speak only what you wish; or any person in whose possession it may be; but be careful to preserve it, as I cannot make another of the kind. I took the box from the monarch of the Genii, and departed with many expressions of gratitude.

I now found a Castle, in the spot where the former stood, the dazzling appearance of which charmed me;

It

It was built of a composition, which had all the splendor, strength and transparency of the most resplendent Diamond; the workmanship noble yet light; and ornamented with various precious stones; on the Golden Doors, was the following inscription, '*The Castle of Truth.*'

I touched the gates with my wand, as I entered, pronounced these words, *whosoever enters the gates of this Castle must remain three months; and I swear by my Art, that unalterable oath, I never will cancel this law.* Then opening the gates, I commanded free access to all who inclined.

I soon experienced the danger attending a *Castle of Truth*. My slaves and attendants now answered me with the utmost candour and honesty, every question I asked them; and very soon so provoked my rage, that I speedily closed the doors on them all; and indeed, their fidelity and attachment have never been replaced to me. I even began to be displeased with Zumio; I saw into his real character, and found he was both deficient in discernment and understanding; that multiplicity of unmeaning words to which he gave free scope disgusted me, and I was astonished they had ever entertained me. I found a great many faults in him, I did not know of before; he was very obstinate, contradicted me at every word; in short, I was disgusted with his want of politeness.

As he still said, however, he had a friendship for me, I did not come to an absolute rupture with him; but I scolded or snapped at him continually, and he insolently replied my pride was insupportable. I commanded him to be silent; he would shrug his shoulders, mock me, alternately shew anger or vexation, and thus we passed our time, either sullenly, or wrangling with each other.

Quite tired of his tete-a-tete, I continually hoped some travellers, invited by the brilliant aspect of my Palace, would wish to enter; but passengers contented themselves with admiring it; they approached it eagerly, but as soon as they read the inscription, as eagerly left it, and pursued their way.

One

One day as I stood with Zumio, on a balcony, we saw a magnificent Chariot at a distance, driving towards the Palace. I knew by my Art this Chariot belonged to a King, accompanied with seven or eight Courtiers. As it approached, Zumio said, at last I hope we shall have a visitor, for which I shall be very glad, for I have been most dreadfully dull ever since I have been here.

As Zumio spoke, the Chariot advanced to the gates; the King read the inscription, and his first movement was to enter; but the courtiers grew pale, shuddered, and detained him. The King persisted for some time; at last he suffered himself to be persuaded, and withdrew; the Courtiers once more recovered their breath, turned the Chariot precipitately away, and soon were out of sight.

So they are gone, cried Zumio, with chagrin; but while you will persist to leave that cursed inscription over the gate, we shall never see a soul. You are so wilful!—I really never met with a Genius so obstinate and stupid.

Your insolence is beyond all bounds, Zumio.

Oh! what you want truth and compliments both at once; your folly is really incomprehensible, and at some moments you are as inconsistent and foolish as you are proud.

Shocked at his excessive impertinence, I was going to drive him from me, when I perceived a figure that fixed my whole attention. A venerable old man, with a majestic presence that inspired respect, and a mild placidity in his countenance, which interested the heart in spite of itself, approached with a book in his hand, reading, and walking slowly.

When he came opposite the Castle gates he lifted up his eyes, and read the inscription. Oh, thou, said he, whom for these forty years I have sought! Oh! celestial Truth, am I then in my latter days permitted to see thee unclouded, and as thou art?

So saying, the old man entered the Palace.

So here is one at last, said Zumio, and instantly left me

me to go and meet the stranger. I followed my little hair-brained Sylph, and we soon met the old man. Zumio flew; come in, come good man, said he, you are very welcome, especially if you can rid us of our horrid dulness. You are old, have been in various scenes of life, and can tell us a good many stories; but first, pray what is your name?

Gelanor, replied the old man; in my youth I lived among men; I have been a great traveller, and for these last twenty years have devoted my days to solitude.

Ah! I perceive, interrupted Zumio, you are a Philosopher; we shall not be much the merrier for you.—Nor will you find much entertainment here, for Philosophers are curious; you, no doubt, imagine you may study mankind in this place, but that is your mistake; you will find nobody here but this Genius, my Master, and me: he, as you perceive, is not very communicative; besides, there is nothing original in his character. As for me, it is true, I have a deal of wit, many virtues and accomplishments, and it will take you some time to know me.

I know you better at present, replied Gelanor, smiling, than you seem to know yourself.

I now spoke in turn, and asked him what was his opinion of himself?

I am good, said he, but imperfect; yet cannot conceive, after having led a life of reflection, and of endeavours to know my own heart, how I can still have so many defects and foibles. This idea, however, is so often present to my mind, that it preserves me from pride, and makes me indulgent. My public and private actions are irreproachable; but I often experience interior sensations which are humiliating; and were I to render an exact and circumstantial account of all the ideas which present themselves to my imagination, I am afraid I should not be found much wiser than others.

When he had said thus, I approached Gelanor, and embraced him with most respectful affection. Oh, my father! said I, I cannot express my admiration; you
are

are a true philosopher, and I shall ever honour, shall eternally respect all those who resemble you.

Some days after this conversation, I determined to obliterate the inscription from the gates of my Palace. I then quitted Gelanor and Zumio, and, without telling them my project, guided by that curiosity which Zumio had inspired, departed for the kingdom of the Princess Arpalisa. Fearing Zumio's indiscretion, I would neither take him with me, nor impart my design.

I soon came to this celebrated Princess, who would not receive me till evening; and I was then introduced into a superb saloon, lighted in a most agreeable manner, the wax lights were all within crystal, covered with white gauze, or set in vases of alabaster; which artifice produced a softness, somewhat like clear moon-light. The princess was seated on a Throne of gold, over which was a pavilion, decorated with drapery of silver gauze; garlands of roses formed elegant festoons, and crowns were suspended over her head.

Arpalisa was clothed in magnificent robes, garnished with precious stones. Her appearance was dazzling, and her beauty seemed to me regular and majestic; though she was not very young, I admired her shape, her noble air, the surprising fairness of her complexion, and was charmed with her conversation.

The next day my admiration was more increased, when, by the orders of the Princess, I was conducted into a gallery full of paintings, and informed they were all the performances of Arpalisa: they were on the most interesting subjects: Temples to Friendship, Sacrifices to Friendship, Friendship triumphing over Love; Time crowning and embellishing Friendship: or Altars to Benevolence, Benevolence enlightened by Virtue, Compassion exciting Benevolence, &c. &c. In fine, it was not possible to leave this gallery, without a full persuasion that Arpalisa was the most gentle and virtuous Princess in the universe.

From thence I was led to the Laboratory, and, returning, my Conductor told me, in confidence, that the
Princess

Princess employed her time, with equal advantage, in Astronomy and Mathematics. As I had a particular love for those sciences, I was enchanted at the discovery: though the high opinion I had before conceived of the Princess was almost incapable of increase.

There was a Concert in the evening, and a Symphony of Arpalisa's composition was performed. The Princess then sat down to the harpsichord, and sang; her voice did not appear very remarkable, but, in fact, it was almost entirely drowned by the accompaniments; but an excellent musician, who sat by my side, assured me, she sung in a superior style; and I found he had reason to say so, for every body was in raptures.

After supper, they made extempore Poetry and Enigmas, which gave the Princess an opportunity of shewing her wit. I could not recover from my amazement; what I heard was incredible, and I found it would not be possible long to preserve my liberty in the presence of so accomplished a Princess.

Every body retired at midnight, and I remained alone with Arpalisa, and her bosom friend Telira. The two friends were reclined on a couch, and tenderly folded in each other's arms; the picture was delightful; I contemplated it in silence, and listened while they said every thing the sublimest friendship could dictate. Arpalisa gave me so lively, and so affecting an impression of her love for Telira, that I was moved even to tears.

I could not forbear to testify, in part, the admiration she inspired; I praised her talents, her knowledge, and introduced the subjects of Astronomy and Mathematics; but Arpalisa, with a tone of the utmost modesty, stopt me, by saying, I am exceedingly vexed, my Lord, you have been persuaded I employ my leisure hours on subjects so little proper for a woman; and were it true I had a taste for such sciences, I would make it a law with myself never to own it. Pedantry and affectation are utter strangers to my heart—And my pretensions really are very few.

This uncommon modesty finished her conquest. I was in transports, and returned to my chamber only to think

think of Arpalisa. I passed a part of the night in writing to her, and making verses upon her. I invented the most ingenious and brilliant feasts; she seemed sensible of my attention; I declared my passion, and she owned that, my power and rank out of the question, she partook my passion; but by an insurmountable delicacy, she never could resolve to marry a Genius; for, after a while, added she, you might attribute that to ambition, which was the pure effect of love. Oh, that you had been born less illustrious!

Such sentiments enchanted, yet drove me to despair.

At other moments, Arpalisa would vaunt the mild content of her present situation. I have no ambition, said she, Friendship is the charm of my life; Love I have never known, and dread to know; for I have a heart too fond, a sensibility too delicate; I am happy and peaceable, and must not flatter you; I cannot resolve to sacrifice such pure and perfect content. No, my Lord, incapable of feigning, incapable of the least coquetry, I would not give you deceitful hopes. Quit this Palace, fly me, for your own repose—and for mine.

Love at last, however, was triumphant, and Arpalisa consented to give me her hand.

Prudina had rendered me so suspicious, I was determined not to wed even the divine Arpalisa, till I had first heard her in the Palace of Truth. I doubted not her sincerity, yet it was impossible I could sacrifice to her the proof of my Palace. I told her I could wed only in my own territories, but took care not to mention a word of the charm. She consented to accompany me, and only required Telira should go with her; for, said she, I could not endure separation from so dear a friend. We departed, and soon found ourselves in the avenues to my Castle.

The aspect of this redoubted place, gave the most lively emotions. I am going, said I, to discover the true state of the heart of her I love; if she be such as I imagine,

imagine, how much shall I reproach myself, for having thought the proof of this Castle necessary; and if she be not, what an angelic illusion shall I lose!

At last we entered the Castle, and I cast a trembling eye on my Princess; but what was my surprise, when I discovered the celestial, the seraphic Arpalisa, was forty-eight years old; was loaded with paint, had pencilled eye-brows, false hair, and a made up form; in fine, that she was bald, red-haired, old, and crooked.

Zumio, who had come to meet me, did not know her in the Castle of Truth; and burst out a laughing, as soon as he beheld a figure so ridiculous, leaning familiarly and triumphantly on my arm. I was so much disconcerted that I hastily quitted the Princess, without troubling myself about what she might think of my behaviour.

Zumio followed me; I give you joy of your good fortune, my Lord, said he; you have, indeed, found out a most rare beauty. I really wonder how you could make such a conquest; your choice, however, proves how substantial your taste is, and you never need fear a rival, or the torments of jealousy.

A single word deprived Zumio of all his pleasantry; I only named Arpalisa, and he stood confounded and aghast.

After a moment's silence, my Lord, said he, I easily conceive your chagrin and disgust: but though the beauty of this Princess be borrowed, though her complexion, shape, and flowing hair, are all artificial, I yet flatter myself we have not been deceived in her soul, her understanding, and talents; and as she has said she loves you, I am persuaded you will find she spoke truth.

If so, said I, Zumio, if I have had the misfortune to make such a woman love me, what will become of me? My only consolation, my only hope, is to find her perfidious.

An attendant now came, to tell me the Princess was inquiring for me, and decorum obliged me to go.

I found her alone in a chamber, and extended on a couch she had a handkerchief and a smelling-bottle,
and,

and, as soon as she perceived me, began to make the most strange contortions.

What ails you, madam ! said I ; are you not well ?

She made no reply, but continued her contortions, and I repeated my question. She then cast a languishing look at me, and said, I am pretending to be in a fit.

I see you are, replied I.

Well, and are not you affected ?

How can I avoid it ? But why are you in a fit ?

Because you left me so coldly when I entered the Palace ; and I want to persuade you my sensibility is excessive, and that I passionately love you.

And do you really love me ?

I ! not the least in the world. I love nothing.

Here the Princess thinking she had spoken the most tender things possible, pretended to weep and dry her eyes, and I recovered. Freed from all inquietude, I now thought proper to prolong a conversation which diverted me ; and taking Arpalisa by the hand, You quite melt me, said I ; who can be insensible to so many charms, and so much love ?——But how your hand shakes !

Yes, said she, I do that on purpose, to make you believe I have convulsive motions.

But it must be very fatiguing.

Not in the least, habit has made me expert.——But you shall presently see something more ; I have not played half my tricks yet ; before we have done you shall see me faint.

Pray tell me what is become of Telira.

Oh, we have quarrelled.

What, already ?

Yes, and I mean to persuade you, that Telira is in part the cause of the situation in which you now see me.

Why, what has passed between you ?

Oh ! you never heard such insolence ; she told me I was deceitful, vain, envious, insensible ; that my pride was unmeasured, my ambition insatiable. I replied, I had never really loved her ; that it was all affectation,
and

and that had she been handsomer and more amiable, she would have given me offence ; that I had not the least regard for her, nor would make the least sacrifice to serve her.

It is inconceivable that this should vex her.

Oh ! she left the room in a fury.

Did you ever repose confidence in her ?

I never had confidence in any person. I desire no friends but dupes and slaves ; not but I have often confided my secrets, but then it was merely through vanity ; and I always disguised or altered facts, and added circumstances, for lies cost me nothing when they would give me consequence.

You are quite adorable, and so benevolent !

Yes, I love pomp and shew excessively.

When we are united, you shall dispose of all my treasures. How many wretches will you relieve with my wealth ?

Oh ! I will certainly keep it all myself.

Divine Arpalisa, how you enchant me ! What an astonishing union of Virtue, Wit, and Knowledge ; for it is in vain you would deny you are as learned as beautiful ? Your Courtiers told me all ; they assured me the evening before we departed, there was not in the whole nation so profound a mathematician as yourself.

They are paid to say so, and are disgraced if they do not. I am exceedingly ignorant, though I wish to be thought otherwise.

How modest !——And then your paintings——

Are every one done by Zolphir.

And the charming Symphonies——

Are all composed by Geraftus.

You are really unique in this world.

It is certain no person ever had more art, or carried dissimulation farther ; for I have imposed upon the most knowing and clear-sighted people.

Arpalisa, in pronouncing this phrase, certainly intended a most modest answer ; for she took so humble an air, with down-cast eyes, and made such comic and ridiculous grimaces, that I could with difficulty restrain myself

self from laughter. Her tone of voice, and the faces she made, agreed so ill with what she uttered, and formed a contrast so singular and pleasant, that I found it impossible to sustain the conversation any longer. I rose to leave her; she called me with a feeble voice, telling me, at the same time, she was going to close her eyes, and to fall into dreadful convulsions. I got away, and went to relate my adventure to the Sylph and the Philosopher.

You pretend, said I to Gelanor, this Castle can only give me pain, and that it can never be of use to me while I am attached to the world; that, in a word, it is only fit for one who is already undeceived by reason and freed from the power of the passions; but do you not now see its use? For had not I brought Arpalisa hither, I should have married a woman at once old, ugly, deceitful, ambitious, and wicked.

But, my Lord, replied Gelanor, you might, without setting foot in this Castle, have easily seen this woman nearly as she is, had you been less subject to take things on trust, and had you less vanity. Learn to see with your own eyes, to judge from facts, and not from the opinions of others; do not so easily believe it is impossible when you think proper to act the Lover, you should not be beloved; and I may assure you, that you will in no part of the world become the dupe of such women as Arpalisa.

Do you think it no advantage, said I, a little touched, to hear a Philosopher speak to me with so much freedom.

When you do not reject truth, replied Gelanor, she will always approach you; she is not shut up within these Castle walls, but is omnipresent upon earth, and is seen more or less disguised, according to the weakness, pride or sincerity with which she is sought; mortal eyes could not support her presence in every incident of life, and thus it is she is seen in this Castle, where she destroys all sweet and innocent illusions, as well as dangerous errors; she here wears so savage a form, so pitiless, so hard, so

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rude, that she wounds and disgusts even when she might be useful.

These reflections did not make me change my opinion; experience only could make me wise.

I questioned Zumio what had passed in the Castle during my absence. Ever since your inscription has been erased, answered Zumio, we have had plenty of visitors; and the crowd is now great; the company is numerous, but the bands of society are broken; disputes, endless quarrels, and gross rudenesses are continually heard. Politeness is absolutely banished; they rail at each other without art or indulgence; they cannot calumniate, but the most biting rancour makes them amends; they hate openly, exclaim, scold, and continue an eternal uproar, of which you can form no idea.

And how do the women behave?

More ridiculous in general than the men; the slightest subject engenders mortal hatred, and they discover falsehood so meditated, and artifices often so puerile, as scarcely to be credited. One tells us, she hopes we shall believe the sight of a Spider makes her ill: another, that she is going to make us imagine she shall fall into hysterics at the sight of a Cat; and even when they have no particular views to answer, some will practise deceit, for so they think they do, merely for amusement: but, continued Zumio, coquettes are most of all disgusting, for they discover so much effrontery, sentiments so perverse, tricks so absurd, so——

What, interrupted I, has not one virtuous woman entered the Castle!

Pardon me, my Lord, there is one.

Zumio stopped, and seemed embarrassed. What is the matter Zumio, said I, what ails you? Speak, I insist upon it.

I am in love, and am mortally afraid you should become my Rival.

And would you not sacrifice your Love to me?

No, indeed.

No!

No! You, who have assured me there is no sacrifice you would not make to secure my happiness!

I exaggerated greatly. I am much attached to you, but I should hesitate to deceive you for Rosamond.

The confession is expressive and passionate.—And Rosamond is very charming.

There is not her equal in the universe; her heart is honest and unpolluted, and deserving the love of a Sylph.

And you love her?

The purity of her sentiments please me, and she has told me she has an inclination for me.

If you are beloved, what have you to fear? For should ambition seduce her, she will be obliged to speak truth, and cannot therefore persuade me I have the preference.

Oh! I am certain of her heart; I am only fearful she should turn your head, and that you then might trouble our repose.

Oh! fear nothing, Zumio, I am no tyrant; besides, I do not wish to become your Rival; and I protest I can converse without trouble or danger, however charming she may be, so long as you shall have her affections.

Since you are resolved to see her, let me go first and speak to her.

Why so?

Because—

Nay, answer.

Because I wish to prejudice her against you, by telling her your faults.

You are very obliging, but I will not give you that trouble; tell me only if she knows the effect of this Castle.

Undoubtedly; she has been here these six weeks, and it is scarcely possible to live in it two days without finding that out.

Followed by the sorrowful and zealous Zumio, I went to find Rosamond, but met Arpalisa. As soon as she saw me, my Lord, cried she, what kind of a place is this you have brought me to? What strange people are assembled



in this Castle? I went into the Saloon for a moment, and there I found the very worst kind of company; women so stupid, men so coxcomical.—Such rudeness! —I never beheld such manners; if you knew the insolence I have been offered—I was in despair to see every body admiring a young Lady they call Rosamond. I endeavoured to dissemble my vexation, but could not; and so I called aloud, Gentlemen, come here, look at me, think of me, pay your addresses to me, and leave that young beauty, whom I detest, since she pleases and attracts all the men.

No sooner had I addressed them thus, than they all burst out a laughing, and hooted, and mocked, as if I had said the most ridiculous thing in the world; I then told them I was the Queen of the Castle, and that tomorrow I should be your Bride; on which their hue and cry began again, and they were even insolent enough to call me old mad woman.—Give me vengeance, my Lord, and drive this Rosamond from the Castle.

Then she has particularly offended you?

She is the only one who offered me no insult, but my hatred is not the less strong; she obtained new praises for her mildness and modesty, and besides she is so beautiful.—I have endeavoured to defame her as much as possible before you; therefore tell me, my Lord, whether what I have said to you, has made any impression upon you.

A very strong one I assure you; and I will go and seek Rosamond immediately, to tell what I think of your justice and moderation.

Go not near her, my Lord, she will seduce you.

Pray be calm. Zumio, conduct the Princess to her apartment.

So saying, I waited not for an answer, but flew to find Rosamond, who was in fact what love and envy had painted her; her beauty was angelic, her modesty and understanding wonderful. I looked, listened, and envied the happiness of Zumio; but as, thanks to the Box which the King of the Genii had given me, I could dis-

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semble my thoughts, I did not inform Rosamond of the strong impression she made upon my heart ; I contented myself with only reading her's ; she told me she was neither coquetish nor inconstant ; that Zumio was the first object she had loved ; that she had not any violent passion for him at present, but that she felt her love would soon equal Zumio's.

I quitted Rosamond, enchanted by her beauty, wit, and character. In the evening I was out of temper, and especially with Zumio ; he complained ; I became more vexed, and drove him from my presence, but called him back a moment after, not to do him justice, but to prevent his being with Rosamond ; I felt my own tyranny, which Love would not of itself have produced ; but Zumio enraged me, by the rudeness and severity of his expressions and reproaches.

The sage Gelanor in vain endeavoured to make peace between us ; alas, said he, were you not in this Castle, and otherwise in the same situation, Zumio would disguise his injurious fears, and excessive resentment, and appear mild and moderate, and you would then be equitable and generous. Remember, my Lord, he is forced to speak what he thinks ; remember he is under the dominion of love and anger, and that to-morrow he will not think as he does to-day.

Do you not see, exclaimed Zumio, that Phanor only wants a pretext to banish me the Castle, that he may drive me from Rosamond ; for do not suppose, that he, like us, is obliged to speak what he thinks ; his art preserves him from any such necessity : he will not own it, because he is naturally suspicious ; but I have found him out in more than twenty falsehoods : thus while he reads our secrets, in spite of ourselves, his own are locked up. What cowardice ! what unworthy meanness !

This reproach, which I but too much merited, drove me so furious, that had it not been for Gelanor, I should certainly have committed some fatal crime. Stop, madman, cried the Philosopher, stop, complete not your dishonour by avenging yourself on a defenceless Rival.

The authoritative voice of virtue brought me to myself; but Gelanor could not convince me of my error without vexing me; I left him hastily, and went and shut myself in my own apartment, that I might indulge, without constraint, my chagrin and ill-humour.

I became gloomy, impatient, morose, fled society, wandered mournfully in my Castle, and sought for Rosamond against my will; she avoided me when I endeavoured to approach her; I saw so much perplexity and disdain in her countenance that I durst not speak.

I found her one evening alone in the garden, sitting in a bower, plunged in a deep revery. I advanced, and perceiving she had been weeping, I asked her the cause of her inquietude? She sighed, Zumio, replied she, has just left me; I saw he was dissatisfied with me, and that afflicts me.

Dissatisfied! said I, with extreme pleasure, why?

Rosamond made me no answer, except by a look of indignation. In vain did I press and question her; she was obstinately silent; hope entered my heart, Zumio was dissatisfied—Rosamond durst not speak; I imagined she read my heart and was affected: all my resolutions, all the obligations I had to Zumio's attachment were forgotten. I fell at her feet, and declared my love in the most passionate terms. I could obtain no answer, but neither could I observe the colouring of anger on the beauteous cheeks of Rosamond; on the contrary, I thought her eyes spoke satisfaction. I again solicited an answer with fresh ardour; Rosamond, still mute, made a motion as if to rise and fly me. I fearing to displease, would not constrain, and therefore left her.

Full of hope, or rather not doubting my happiness, I sought for solitude to think on Rosamond. I had walked thus two hours, when Zumio suddenly appeared, animated by the most violent rage. So, perfidious Spirit, cried he, you have seduced Rosamond. I have observed for some days past her silence and thoughtfulness, and at last the Die is cast; she has declared she loves me no longer, but that she adores you.

Zumio!

Zumio ! What is it you tell me ! Dearest Zumio ! I am sorry for you——But oh ! be generous enough to sacrifice your love.

I am obliged to sacrifice it, but at the same time my friendship for you is gone.

Nay, Zumio——

You merit not a friend ; nor will I ever forget or forgive treachery so black.

Accuse me not of treachery, Zumio, for you never confided in me. You suspected me before I thought of Rosamond ; had it not been for your unjust jealousy, your injurious reproaches and passions, Phanor had never been your Rival ; but you insulted, vexed, aggravated me, and so highly offended me, that for a moment I forgot our friendship. I have been weak, but not perfidious ; besides, in robbing you of Rosamond's heart, I have broken no sacred engagements ; she had not promised to give you her hand. Hope was all she had granted. Triumph then, dear Zumio, over your resentment, and make not my wrongs greater than they are. Rosamond is altered, think not of her, and torment me not with such distressing complaints.

When I had said this, I drew near to take Zumio in my arms ; but he immediately drew back ; and run off, saying, *I detest you.*

I was astonished, yet happy, and forgave him his anger, and without troubling myself more about it, flew to find Rosamond. She received me at first with great perplexity ; but how excessive was my joy, when she blushing owned she loved me, and me only ; that she had never felt for Zumio more than an emotion of preference, but her love for me was real.

Do you indeed love me for myself, cried I, has ambition no——Here Rosamond interrupted me ;—dare you presume to think it ; banish such suspicions, my Lord, they are insults. I never had other ambition than that of pleasing you ; and if you had no Castle but a cottage to offer me, all the Kings and Genii of the world would be refused for you.

You may more easily imagine, than I describe, the motions I felt at hearing an answer like this in the Castle of Truth. How much did I congratulate myself on the possession of this Castle, which procured me happiness so pure; for, said I, could I have persuaded myself any where else, that in this answer there was no exaggeration.

To expedite our nuptials I left her, and gave orders for their being solemnized next day. The news soon resounded through the Castle. As for Arpalisa, she had known the Charm above a fortnight, and had shut herself up in her apartment there, to hide from all eyes her fury and her shame; and there to wait, as she did with inexpressible impatience, the expiration of the three months, which she was obliged to remain in this enchanted Castle. Zumio, become my enemy, was with her; for my own part, being totally occupied about Rosamond, I neither felt the happiness of being justly despised, nor was I in a condition to think of the wrong I had done.

It was a long and wearisome night! Hymen's torch was not to be lighted till day, and then I was to wed the most beautiful and lovely lady upon earth. Certain of her virtue, the goodness of her disposition, the purity of her mind, sure of being passionately beloved. I again found that bliss which, for a moment, Agelia taught me to taste. Rosamond, less lively, less poignant than Agelia, had neither her caprices nor singularities, but the happiness I anticipated with her, promised to be more permanent and substantial, as I thought.

Aurora no sooner begun to send her beams into my chamber, than I, unable to restrain my impatience, rose and flew to Rosamond's apartment. I took a basket, garnished with flowers and precious stones, into which I put a billet, which I was desirous she should receive when she awaked; and I entered her chamber, without either being seen or heard; Rosamond was asleep; and, after having placed the basket at her feet, I hesitated a little, her beauties astonishing me.

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rious cyphers. This operation over, Zumio came, and on him I first tried the virtue of your Talisman; I told him I did not love him, and found the box gave me the capability of disguising my thoughts. Zumio left me in despair; I went to find and meet you. I had but one fear, which was, that you had discovered my theft, though scarcely two hours had passed since it had happened; but soon found you had not. While you expressed your transports, I adroitly slipt my crystal box into your pocket, and kept yours. I knew the cheat must in time be discovered, if we remained here, but I flattered myself I should easily prevail on you quickly to quit this Castle. I had been tempted by opportunity, spurred on by ambition, I had not leisure to weigh coolly the dangers of an undertaking at once so foolish and improper.

My Lord, you are now acquainted with every thing concerning this affair; and I sincerely regret having deceived you; I reproach myself more for having sacrificed Zumio; but I have discovered no malice, have not debased myself; and though deprived of the Talisman, and obliged to speak truth, I still can say I love virtue; and that I never should have violated its sacred duties, had I become your wife, in consequence of my plan.

I was now compelled to love Rosamond with all her ambition; penetrated with regret, overwhelmed with despair, and more in love than ever, I cast myself at her feet. Oh, Rosamond! cried I, it is impossible for me to vanquish the passion you cannot participate; I am not beloved; but deign, at least, to give me the right ever to love you; deign still to reign in this Castle; let Hymen for ever unite your destiny to mine. Come, I am ready to attend you to the Altar.

I am neither bold, My Lord, nor mean; had I married you, I doubt not you should have been happy; but now when even that hope is fled, I never will be yours.

This uncommon delicacy delighted me, and I vainly essayed to vanquish it; she persisted in her refusal; I again saw Zumio; told him all that had passed. She took the resolution,

resolution, the same day, to quit the Castle of Truth, and Zumio declared he was determined to follow her. I flatter myself, added he, that when we have left this accursed Castle, Rosamond may persuade me she has only been guilty of a slight wrong towards me, the remembrance of which I ought to lose. Farewel, my Lord, and as I engage I never shall again enter these walls, if you abide here ; farewel, for ever.

And will you, Zumio, abandon me ?

As Rosamond loves you not, I no longer hate you ; but my resentment against you is still strong ; were I able to conceal it, as I have still much attachment for you in my heart, and likewise much compassion, I might be capable to console you, and excite your gratitude and admiration, by sacrificing a woman, who, it must be owned, would have sacrificed me ; but you rend my heart, I can disguise nothing ; it is not possible to shew myself more generous, or less vindictive than I really am ; besides, should I hereafter repent the having made such a sacrifice, you would instantly know it, and I should lose its fruits ; therefore, adieu, my Lord, and if you wish to preserve friends, follow my counsel, and take another dwelling.

To add to my grief, Zumio left me and followed Rosamond ; thus, in one unhappy day, my friend and mistress forsook me.

The Philosopher remained ; prompted by his curiosity, he continued in a place, which furnished a Philosopher with so many subjects for reflection. Touched to see my profound grief, he pressed me to abandon my Castle. No, Gelanor, said I, no ; here will I stay till I have found an amiable woman of virtue and sensibility who may yet make amends for all the calamities my unhappy love has produced.

As I was walking one day through a bower of myrtles and orange-trees, Gelanor came to seek me. Here are two guests, said he, a man and a woman of a delightful form, who have unthinkingly entered the Castle, and are exceedingly afflicted to learn they are obliged
to

The merest accident caused me to cast my eye on her table, just as I was about to retire ; but what was my stupefaction, when I beheld, upon that table, the Box, the Talisman, which the Sovereign of the Genii had given me, that I myself should not be subjected to the charm of the Castle.

I supposed I had been mistaken by an accidental resemblance ; for searching in my pocket, I there found a box : I again recovered my breath, took confidence, examined carefully, and thought that that I found in my pocket was the true one. Taking up the other, however, which lay on the table, for farther conviction, I could no longer doubt my misfortune. I perfectly saw by comparing them together, that Rosamond's was the Talisman, and that which I had was a counterfeit.

Amazed and perplexed, I could form no probable conjecture concerning this adventure, but took the Talisman, put the counterfeit on the table, again snatched up my basket, in order to retire hastily, lest I should be suspected.

My vexation and passion I cannot describe. I knew not how or when Rosamond had procured my Talisman, but it was evident there was treachery at the bottom. So then ! cried I, all the power of magic is unable to cope with the perfidy of women ; even here in this Castle, they fall upon schemes to impose on us.

Whenever Rosamond arose, I waited on her ; I was in great agitation, which she soon perceived, and enquired the cause.

I have had some disagreeable thoughts, I replied, and somehow I dread that Zumio shares your affections.

You wrong me much indeed then.

I was transported at hearing this, and was restored almost to my former Paradise when she said,

My constancy is unshaken ; my virtue is real and not to be shaken ; you are going to become my husband, and I would prefer death to the infamy of betraying you. I made no promise to Zumio, commit no crime in re-

nouncing him, and my pride is gratified by sacrificing my Love.

What say you, replied I, in astonishment.

Why are you so much surprised, said Rosamond? are you not convinced of my Love?

Do you think I should?

Indeed I must confess it is Zumio I love; but my virtue might easily triumph over that inclination, for I will see Zumio no more, but attach myself to you; gratitude and duty are all powerful over my heart; you are vain, I am virtuous, and I can easily make you believe I love you above all men.

I now found it impossible to keep within bounds; my passion overcame me, and Rosamond soon perceived I had found out the deception of the Talisman.

Alas! exclaimed she, now will Zumio have ample vengeance on his ambitious mistress and perfidious friend, and heaven is just. Yes, my Lord, ambition seduced my soul; informed of your passion by Zumio, I regretted the rank and power which such a marriage would confer on your consort; Zumio enraged, overwhelmed me with reproaches, and irritated me; I commanded him to leave me; you soon after appeared, and unwilling you should know my thoughts, I determined to be silent; scarce had you quitted me, ere I saw shining among the green herbs, the fatal Talisman, which in all likelihood, had fallen out of your pocket when you so passionately threw yourself at my feet; by a very singular chance, I happened to possess a box of rock crystal, very like your Talisman, and at first I thought it was my own box; but examining further, I discovered the mystic characters which are engraved upon the lid; I then no longer doubted it was a Talisman. Zumio had told me the enchantment of the Castle had no effect on you; and I guessed that this box was the preservative which might, perhaps, guard you from the effects of this dangerous charm; I immediately ran to my chamber, sought for, and found my own box, and with a diamond's point, traced, and perfectly imitated the myste-

rious

membrance of generous actions remains, and this it is which makes attachments durable. I might forget the love of Nadir, but never that he has travelled almost through the world for these three years, in hopes of serving me.

Alas! replied I, and must I see you in the possession of Nadir, and be driven to extremity?

Such extremity is the whim of an hour. Can you seriously ask me to sacrifice so faithful, so generous a friend? — You who had not the trifling merit (trifling, because it is involuntary) to regret for any reasonable space of time, the mistress whom you had lost by your own fault; the inhabitants of this Castle are not remarkable for their taciturnity; I have questioned them, and, you may well suppose, know the Anecdotes of Arpalisa and Rosamond: speak not then to me of a passion I no longer feel. Open your eyes, my lord? you are born virtuous and amiable; but while you preserve this injurious suspicion and imprudent curiosity, which characterise you at present, you neither can know repose nor happiness. Think what this fatal infatuation of wishing to penetrate the secret foldings of the heart you love has already cost you: without mentioning myself; remember Rosamond, who was charming, sincere, virtuous, sensible of benefits, capable of gratitude, and, in any other place but this, of making you perfectly happy. Remember the amiable little Zumio, who so sincerely loved you, and whom you drove from you. Oh cease, my Lord, to wish to destroy necessary illusions; abandon this fatal Castle, or for ever renounce friendship, love, society, and, in fact, all those connections and enjoyments which render life comfortable.

What she said, struck me the more, because Agelia, with firmly not to be shaken, persisted in her resolution to wed Nadir. Unable to support the cruel fight, I came at length to a determination; and wishing, at least to gain the esteem of Agelia, heaped benefits on Nadir; left the Castle, engaging myself never to enter these gates if impelled by jealousy or suspicion.

I think

I think, replied Agelia, your engagement would be more to the purpose, were you never to come here again on any account whatever.

It is not in my power to engage for that, answered I, but to prove to you I do not intend to come often, or stay long, I here give you, dearest Agelia, the Talisman, which the ambitious Rosamond once purloined; this box, as you know, is a certain preservative against the enchantment of the Castle; you are obliged to stay here three months, and in that time it may be of some service to you. Farewel for ever.

If you allow me to give it to Nadir, replied Agelia, I will accept it; deceit is always painful, but to be deceived is often the greatest of pleasures. If he should dive into my thoughts; so therefore allow me to put your Talisman into his hands.

The Talisman is yours, do with it what you think proper, to your happiness I sacrifice it; but now, obliged as I am to speak what I think, deign, for the last time, to hear a faithful avowal of the passion you inspire. Never, Agelia, have I loved any as I have loved you; never shall I forget you. Adieu! pity the unhappy Phanor; for your compassion and regard are the only mitigations my grief permits.

While I thus spoke, I observed the tears of the lovely feeling Agelia begin to flow; too much affected to reply, she gave me her hand, which I bathed with my tears.—At length I tore myself from her, quitted her for ever, left the Castle of Truth, and I have never since returned to it.

Phanor having thus finished his story, thus addressed Altemira.—This is the secret I have had the fortitude, for sixteen years, to conceal. Never, dear Altemira, have I doubted your virtue or affection: the Castle of Truth cannot add to the esteem I have for you; it might enfeeble, or at least disturb, for a moment, that sincere attachment

to remain here three months; they are consulting together, and I believe, mean to ask your permission to be married here; but, in all likelihood, a quarter of an hour's conversation will rob them of that wish, for no more time is requisite here to make a breach between the happiest of lovers.

While Gelanor was thus speaking, the youth approached: I advised him, enquiring if he yet continued firmly resolved to marry his mistress?

I am indeed, my Lord, said he, and as my resolution is not occasioned by Love, there is the less fear of a relapse.

And are you not in love?

I am not; formerly I loved this lady personally, as she did me, but an extraordinary accident tore my mistress from me, only to persecute her; this I knew, but knew not into what part of the world she was carried. Love obliged me to go in search of her, and I left my country, vowing never to return till I had found her whom I adored. My travels lasted three years; Love followed, or rather guided my path, for the first year; but the way at length became too wearisome for him, and he left me; I however, did without him, and continued my route; but I soon travelled slower, and stopped oftener, till my fidelity vanished, for I stopped too long.

But friendship and honour made me again recollect my engagements; I continued my travels, and found the woman I had so passionately loved, but who now was no more than a dear and interesting friend. She was deeply affected by all I had done for her; incapable of deceiving me, she confessed she no longer had the power of participating that love she supposed she inspired; for that during so long an absence, another object had touched her heart. At present, added she, I am free, and I am never more liable to the seductions of love; let sincerity, Oh Nadir! be thought the best proof of my gratitude; and if, after this confession, you love me still, to you I am ready to devote my life; you have lost an ardent lover, and in her room have got a steady friend and constant and affectionate wife.

Her

Her honesty delighted me, and in return I ceased to dissemble ; I opened my heart to this generous, amiable friend, pressed her to unite her destiny to mine, and obtained the promise of her hand, when we got home again.

In about a month after our departure, we approached the loved land that gave us birth, when happening to see this magnificent Castle, curiosity invited us to enter ; but since we are obliged to pass three months here, let me conjure you, my Lord, to allow us to defer our union no longer.

If your mistress agrees, I said, I had no objection.

Be pleased to ask her, my Lord, she comes.

I looked about, and beheld her coming—I trembled ; my heart beat violently, I started to meet her—Heavens ! cried I, it is Agelia—I was not deceived, it was she herself ; surprize, confusion, feelings unaccountable, mixed with grief, vexation and joy ; emotions all violent and diverse, rendered me unmoveable. Agelia was silent for a moment, then laughed aloud ; and so, my Lord, said she, you are incorrigible—For I now know the virtue of your Castle—And has all my admonitions and advices produced this effect ?

Her raillery I could not bear, the rather as she spoke mostly chearfully and without concern ; distracted, despairing, I made no reply, but precipitately retired, to conceal feelings which it was impossible to dissemble. I never, hitherto, had really loved any but Agelia ; and this passion, which was so true and strong, was instantly rekindled ; I saw her again, found her more amiable, more charming than ever ; her manners were so natural, and her mind so candid, that even in the Castle of Truth her accomplishments shone with undiminished lustre.

Love no longer influenced Nadir ; Agelia felt only friendship for him ; hope again seduced me ; I spoke to, conjured Agelia to prefer me to the indifferent Nadir : remember, said I, that I love you to excess, while he does not.

Love, my Lord, said Agelia, evaporates, but the remembrance

tachment by which we are at present united ; and, if you take my advice you will never attempt a journey of such risque.

My dear Phanor, replied Altemira, I am anxious to have an opportunity of repeating, in the Castle of Truth, that I never loved any but Phanor.

Such a declaration was in some degree agreeable to the Genius, especially that the Queen was so firmly resolved, since it proved so well her virtue ; he only required she should seriously reflect for six months ; and if, said he, you are then of that mind, we will immediately prosecute the journey.

The time being elapsed, Altemira was anxious to depart, and take with her her daughter, and Prince Philamir, who was to espouse Zeolide. My daughter, said she, is certain of the heart of Philamir ; but she desires he should read hers likewise, and, ere he receives her hand be assured of her faith. The Prince knows the effects of the Castle, yet ardently wishes to go with us ; Zeolide wishes to take her dear and amiable friend, Palmis, so beloved by her and us, and whom I propose acquainting what is the charm of the Castle this evening.

I have a plan also, replied Phanor, to take thither three or four Courtiers, whom I should not be sorry to know, and whom I shall not inform of the secret of the much to be dreaded place whither they are going ; for were I so to do, I imagine they would find some pretext to be excused taking such a journey : on which account, Philamir and Zeolide, must be enjoined in secrecy.

Altemira and Zeolide, that night, confided the secret to their friend, and Palmis at first shewed more surprize than eagerness to take this journey. However, after some reflection, Palmis said, I have nothing essential to reproach myself of ; my attachment to you is genuine, not feigned I therefore wish to attend you.

Palmis acknowledged at same time she loved a young Courtier, named Chrisel, whose natural levity she feared. Chrisel was a man of fashion, and such a quality does
not

not inspire love with confidence. Palmis wished her lover might go with them, to which Phanor consented.

The hour of departure arrived, Altemira, Zeolide, Philamir, and Palmis, were the only persons who knew the secret of the Castle of Truth; and, in proportion as they approached it, their gaiety decreased; melancholy and inquietude invaded their hearts; Zeolide was the most tranquil, but Philamir became thoughtful and absent; the gloom of Palmis was visible, and the Queen was alarmed at remarking the trouble of Phanor. The Courtiers, who knew not the cause, vainly endeavoured to enliven the lost gaiety of the Genius: the Queen and Zeolide, the Lover of Palmis, the amiable and brilliant Chrisel, never discovered more grace or greater desire to please; and when conversing with Palmis in secret, he painted his passion with so much feeling and heat, that her suspicions vexed her.

One of those Courtiers who attended Phanor, was a man of an odd character, seldom met with in Courts. Aristeus (so he was called) had done the State great service, arrived at the highest honours by merit alone; he did not come to Court till his youth was past, and he brought thither a bluntless and moroseness in his manner, that gave him an air of originality, which had the greatest effect, because it formed so strong a contrast to the manners usually seen in such places. A frigid and satiric Courtier is not very likely to become a favourite; but his success for that very reason was at first as great as his singularity amusing; but finding afterwards his understanding equalled his ill-humour, they endeavoured too late to get him driven out; so he was settled at Court, as both Altemira and Phanor valued him.

But what is most remarkable when established there, he did not alter his behaviour; for he not only forbore false panegyric, but he was never even heard to praise; and though very capable of zealously serving his friends, he never said an agreeable or pleasant thing, nor was a friendly offer known to escape him.

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The Castle of Truth was now at hand, and Phanor had a private conversation with the Queen. I confess to you, said he, I cannot enter this Castle, which has been so fatal to me, without chagrin, nor can I dissimble. I stand greatly in need of your indulgence. What husband, who has been married seventeen years, can say he never has been chargeable with a fault—Too minute investigation will rather vex you.

I shall ask you no questions then, my Lord, replied the Queen in a pet.

Nor will I you, said Phanor.

I am under no apprehensions from yours, my Lord, therefore do not fear to meet them.

I candidly confess to you, that as the most scrupulous candour will be necessary, I have some dread, replied Phanor.

Acknowledge then, said Altemira, you at present deeply regret you sacrificed your precious Talisman, which gave you the happy power to conceal your thoughts in the Castle of Truth from Agelia, that beautiful fair one.

The Genius gave no answer but a sigh; and the Queen gave place to a fit of melancholy.

The shining walls of the Castle now appeared, more than one heart was agitated, but they felt too late all the consequences of so dangerous a voyage. They descend, proceed, and enter the fatal gates.

On entering the Castle, the first object that caught the attention of the Genius was the venerable Gelanor, the virtuous Philosopher, whom he had left above eighteen years before in the Castle of Truth. Phanor hastily left the Queen, glad of a pretext to be at some distance from her; and ran to salute Gelanor, with whom he retired into the Gardens.

My Lord, said the Philosopher, who is this you have brought with you?

A wife I have married.

A wife! Strange! Did you reflect well?

Her virtue is undoubted.

Many

Many husbands, my Lord, within these nineteen years, have I known enter this Castle with the same security, and leave it convinced of their mistake.

Such doubts distress not me; Altemira knows the effects of this Castle, yet would come hither. I have little uneasiness concerning what I may know of her, but much for what she may learn me.—But tell me, venerable Sage, satisfy my curiosity.—Time has not yet effaced Agelia from my memory; and every thing here recalls her remembrance—Did she marry Nadir, when I left you?

She did, my Lord, and that very hour, gave him the Talisman she had of you. Nadir, touched by so delicate and generous a procedure, determined never to question her, and thus they passed three months in the most perfect understanding.—My Lord, take a lesson from them.

If the Queen inclines, I agree.

As Gelanor and the Genius were thus conversing, Zeolide was walking with the Queen, and the rest of the newly arrived travellers. The young Princess and Philamir were a little before. After a moment's silence, Philamir said, Ever since I have been in this place, I have found an insurmountable embarrassment. I dare not speak my thoughts; I tremble lest what I say here should not seem sufficiently warm.

So then heretofore you flattered.

Perhaps I did.

Base man! half my feelings were not expressed.

What an enchanting speech! adorable Zeolide?

But, say, did you ever love me?

You alone I have loved: on you depends my happiness.

Enough, enough, replied the Princess.—Yes, dear Philamir, we will prove, that even this Castle cannot be fatal to true Lovers; and that far from destroying, it increases affection, by dissipating all the doubts which is too often felt by a lively passion.

While

While she thus spoke, Altemira and Palmis came up; Philamir left them, and the princesses separated themselves from the group of Courtiers that followed them in the gardens; and Philamir and Chrisel went into a thicket, at the entrance of which they saw a young woman sitting on a bank. She was handsome, and Chrisel would go and speak to her. The Prince soon found she was but just arrived, and that she no more than Chrisel knew how impossible it was to conceal her thoughts. He enquired her name Afema; she replied.

Your manner is whimsical and flirting, which is agreeable enough, said Chrisel, thinking he had praised her extravagantly, and astonished to see with what an air of surprise and disdain she received his compliment.—And so, said he, you are a woman, and is not flattery agreeable.

Is that your flattery: you think me ugly, perhaps?

Ugly! I just now said, you are the most delightful creature I ever saw.

You are fantastical indeed Sir, but it matters not; for, I value Simple Honesty.

You have a deal of penetration indeed Sir.

I am sure at least you have plenty of sincerity.

Lord, Sir, sincerity, I never speak truth; it is all an air I assume to impose upon you.

Chrisel could not stifle a laugh, and Afema turning towards Philamir, said, Why are you so very silent, my Lord?

Why do you ask?

As I would wish to make a conquest of you?

I cannot say I ever met a lady so singular.

And you delight me exceedingly; I dare say you have strong passions, and are easily imposed on.

I have been in love.

Very childishly I doubt not. Are you deeply smitten?

Deeply, and on my success my happiness depends.

No doubt—and it makes me happy.

Why so?

I like

I like vastly to set lovers at variance. Is your mistress here ?

Yes.

I'll seek her out, and if she is handsome enough to pique my vanity, will render you faithless. I shall walk this evening in the Orange-Grove ; and I tell you so expressly, that you may come and meet me there. So saying, she rose, and Philamir going to detain her, said, Do not you see by my air of affectation, I want to make you believe I think you a dangerous man, and consequently shun you ?

She then very modestly retired.

This lady, said Chrisel, is really the most extraordinary and odd kind of person I ever met. Women are all coquettes and deceitful, but she is the only one I have ever seen who was indiscreet enough to own it ; her wish to seduce, and her excessive imprudence, make her truly whimsical and original. Were I in your place, my Lord, I would not neglect to meet her.

Is that your real opinion ?

Certainly——would you be so scrupulous because you are in love with Zeolide ?—Childish folly !

What, replied Philamir, would it be practical to turn the brain of such a coquetish girl as her ?

I doubt not, if you manage prudently.

I have no such plan—Yet I have a wish to attend the appointment.

The sudden appearance of Palmis interrupted the conversation ; she had not yet an opportunity of speaking alone with Chrisel, therefore, as soon as she saw him she approached, and the Prince left them together. Palmis was agitated ; she dreaded to question her Lover ; and Chrisel, thinking about something else, did not remark her perplexity. At last Palmis, fetching a deep sigh, said, Why are you silent, Chrisel ? Are you thinking of me ?

No sooner did he hear the question, than assuming the most passionate manner possible, and tenderly kissing the
the

the hand of Palmis, Chrifel replied, Oh ! no, I never think or trouble myself about you, I protest I do not.

How ! Faithless man, cried Palmis.

Do you doubt my truth ? Ah, Palmis, how unjust you are. Yes, said he, falling on his knees, it has been my study to deceive you. Ambition and vanity alone have attached me to you. Do justice, Palmis, to your Lover, for he is incapable of affection ; be comforted, be secure, and let these sincere protestations drive all doubts from your mind.—But why is anger so visible in your looks ? How have I offended you ? And wherefore to-day will you not believe me ?—Do you wish me to swear ?—Oaths cost me nothing.

Wretch, cried Palmis, I can listen no longer.

Tears impeded speech, and overwhelmed with excessive grief, she sunk on a garden-seat ; Chrifel still kneeling, feigned to weep. Do not you see, said he, how I pretend to shed tears : really, beautiful Palmis, you quite weary me, and though you are naturally as unreasonable as insipid, I never before saw you so intolerably tiresome.

Begone, said Palmis, repelling Chrifel with indignation, you give me horror.

There is, certainly, said Chrifel, something I cannot understand in all this : perhaps, said he, with an air of freedom, you wish to break with me ; if so, speak ; there is no necessity for all these tears, this tragic tone ; let us remain friends at least ; and this I wish, because your credit and favour may yet be useful to make my fortune.

Palmis made no other answer, than by rising with impetuosity ; and as she flew from him, darted a look of contemptuous rage at Chrifel.

The Courtier stood confounded, and as he reflected on this strange adventure, heard a tumult of voices. He walked towards the noise, and entered a verdant Amphitheatre full of passengers newly arrived, to the number of about thirty, sitting on the grass-banks, and forming
a circle

a circle round Gelanor. Chrisel, as he entered, asked why they were all assembled ;

My Lord, said Gelanor, for these nineteen years I have done the honours of this Castle ; have neglected nothing to make it agreeable to strangers, and have only required one thing in return, which is, to follow me to this place, and answer a single question which I put to each person.

And what question is that, pray ?

I only desire to know if they are happy.

Well, and have you found many people satisfied with their condition ?

Their names are all written in a book, and I am ill at the first page ; but, alas ! we ought not to wonder at this, since Virtue and Reason alone can give happiness.

Have you begun your Catechism of to-day ?

Yes ; I have questioned nearly half this Assembly. Will you, Sir, be kind enough to answer me ?

Oh, willing. I have been very successful at Court, made a great fortune, ruined half a score women, who all before they knew me had excellent reputations ; and yet I am not happy, am weary of myself, enjoy nothing, but wish for what I do not possess, with an ardour that consumes me.

Let us pass on to another, said Gelanor. What say you, grave stranger ? addressing himself to a little olive-coloured man with a disdainful air.

I am called a Philosopher, said the stranger, in an imperious and dogmatic tone.

Then, comrade, answered Gelanor, smiling, you are happy.

I happy ! no indeed.

And what prevents you ?

Pride. I associated myself with some others like myself, and among us we have formed a vast and hardy project. We wished to reign and domineer over the minds of men ; and we had a celebrated Magician for a Chief, who gave us a Talisman, on which were engraved these three words, *Benevolence, Tolerance, Philosophy*. My friend

friend, said the magician, the virtue of these three words is such, that to obtain your end, you have only incessantly to repeat them, and rest faithfully attached and submissive to your chief. With this Talisman and my protection, you will want neither knowledge nor genius; you may daringly say, and write all the extravagancies which shall enter your imagination, you shall have an exclusive authority to reason wrong; be inconsistent, trouble established order, overturn moral principles and corrupt manners, without losing your consequence; if you are attacked make no reply, beware of discussion. I permit insults only, and declamations void of meaning, but no reasoning; keep constantly repeating the same thing, *Benevolence, Tolerance, Philosophy*. Should it be proved you are neither benevolent, tolerant, nor a Philosopher, be not frightened, only repeat and cry with more force and obstinacy than ever, these three sacred and magic words, *Benevolence, Tolerance, Philosophy*, and you shall triumph over all your enemies, at least as long as I shall live. So spoke this great enchanter, and his promises had their full effect; but, alas! we have had the misfortune to lose a chief so worthy of our regret; and since his death, the Talisman has lost its virtue, and our empire is no more. Usurpers as we are, our Partisans are vanished, we can excite no more confusions and are now forgotten.

This speech the assumed Philosopher concluded with a sigh.

Zoram, one of Phanor's Courtiers, joined the company: hold, cried Chrisel, addressing himself to Gelanor, if you want to find a happy man interrogate this, whose mirth is so great it approaches folly, amusing himself with every thing, enthusiastic and whimsical—Is it not so?

Such are my pretensions, he replied.

Pretensions! Are you not distractedly fond of hunting, painting, music,——

I am fatigued with hunting; the best music in the world to me is only noise, and I have no taste for paint-

L

ing;

ing ; but I keep hounds, hire musicians, and buy pictures ; that is, I ruin myself, to make the world suppose I am entertained and pleased.

But come, no joking, say seriously.

This satisfies me, replied Gelanor ; and now let me question this Lady, who is sitting in the midst of that agreeable group of children and young Ladies. You are the mother of a family, madam, said Gelanor ?

My children are these around.

And are you happy ?

Say, my children, the question is for you.

When she had spoken, her two eldest daughters, with tears of joy in their eyes, ran to her arms with the most tender expressions of gratitude ; and crying, with all our hearts we love her.

And have I this day beheld a happy person ;—Say, Madam, your name ?

Eudemonia.

Pray favour me with answers to a few questions. How long have you enjoyed the pure and affecting happiness, of which you now present so enchanting a picture.

Since I have been a mother.

How do you live ?

Very retired ; my children occupy my attention one half of the day ; friendship and study the other.

Are your friends numerous ?

They are not ; but they are faithful.

Are you possessed of great riches ?

I am not ; nor ever shall.

Why ?

I have no taste for pomp ; and know no other use for money, but to distribute.

Are you very ambitious ?

No, indeed ? not even for my children ; for reason and experience have taught me, honours and wealth are not the source of happiness.

The Philosopher took his book from his pocket, and with inexpressible joy in his countenance, inscribed Eudemonia's name.

Zoram

Zoram and Chrisel quitted the garden, and went towards the Castle; the little Court of the Genius assembled in the Saloon; Aristeus the satiric and surly Courtier, already mentioned, was talking to the Queen, who was surprised to find he had lost much of his moroseness; that his manners were more mild, and that he could say obliging things. Zoram and Chrisel entered the Saloon; the Princess was going to her music, and tuning her harp, Philamir sat beside her, and the sorrowful unhappy Palmis leaned languishingly against a pillar, thought of the perfidious Chrisel, and was mournfully silent. Chrisel approached Phanor, who was thoughtfully walking. Being desirous of saying something civil of the Queen, he followed the Genius, and as soon as he was near enough Altemira to be heard, stopped, and with a look of great complaisance, addressing himself to the Genius, said, how much the Queen shews her age to-day; it is not possible to think she is less than thirty-eight at least.

The Queen, though still beautiful, was no longer vain of her person, but smiled. You flatter sometimes Chrisel.

That was my inclination at present, madam.

Does my dress please you?

I dislike it much; it does not suit your age.

Then with a most obliging and gentle tone and manner, Chrisel, quite satisfied with himself, and with what he had said, made his obeisance, and returned to the Genius.

Zoram went up to Palmis, and, desirous of awakening her from her reverie, by inciting agreeable ideas in her mind, said, Good God! madam, your eyes are sunk in your head, and how red your nose is; you do not look handsome to-day at all. Nay, do not affect that disdainful air, nor think what I say is flattery to deceive; believe me, it is the truth.

Zeolide was sitting, and preluding on her instrument; Zoram, in order to maintain his reputation for a connoisseur passionately fond of music, hastily approached, with

every démonstration of gladness. The Princess sang, and accompanied herself; Zoram listened, and beat out of time, clapping as if he had been mad. Before the air was half over, he exclaimed, still continuing his hand-applause, How wearisome, and tiresome it is!

The Princess was a little disconcerted and stopped; I am quite delighted, madam, said he to see you the dupe of these affected transports; it was to act transport, that I made this bustle.

The rest of the courtiers were astonished to hear him, and absolutely supposed poor Zoram was mad. Chrisel, who was particularly intimate with him, wishing to appear afflicted for his misfortune, put on an air of tender amazement, and exclaimed, Poor Zoram, how happy I am to see him thus! I shall gain by it; I will this very evening solicit Phanor for his place.

And so, taking Zoram by the arm, he left the Saloon, dragging him away.

The Princess then asked her lover, laughing, if he, like Zoram, thought the air she had been playing, insipid?

I was not attending, replied Philamir, something else took up my thoughts.

Zeolide blushed with vexation, and Aristeus said, I, madam, have not lost a bar of it, and I think the air a very good one, and I am in raptures with your voice.

Is it possible, Aristeus, interrupted the Genius, what are you becoming a gallant flatterer?

That I do not propose, he replied, but I am neither so frigid nor unfeeling as I appear; I am somewhat cross and wish to be thought singular, for which reason I pass my life in snarling and finding fault, entirely from a spirit of contradiction; besides, I have made it a law with myself, never openly to praise nor flatter, but on important matters, and not directly.

How now;—I conceive your meaning; pray, did you never flatter me.

I possess your esteem, because you believe I have not; yet love me, because I really have; you believe, simply enough;

enough, that a man with a gruff tone and blunt manners, cannot flatter; you are suspicious of other Courtiers, but in full security with me; but flattery can take various forms, nor is there more than one way to escape its seductions, and that is to be insensible to them. You love flattery, and I give it you; I naturally hate it, and had you despised it, I should never have had this meanness to reproach myself with; but thus only could I obtain your confidence; if I deceive sometimes, you force me to it; and had not you corrupted me, I never should have used artifice; I feel how much I am debased, remember it, am enraged at you, and regard you not, although your servant.

Get out of my sight, insolent! cried Phanor, with his eyes inflamed with fury, let me never behold you again.

Zeolide was sadly affrighted at these words, she hastily rose, and, followed by Palmis, went into the gardens. Alas! said Zeolide, I begin to find how fatal this Castle is; this unfortunate Aristeus, who has done the State so many services, is disgraced and ruined.—And have I any reason to be better satisfied? How did Philamir answer me? It was for him I sang, yet he deigned not to listen. What then did he think of? Ah! had I only enquired—I say no more.—Oh, Palmis, judge what I feel.

I see nothing you have to complain of, replied Palmis, coldly.

What! the indifference, the cruel disdain of Philamir.

You are ridiculously susceptible.

That is a strange expression.

Alas! I have not the power to chuse.—Pardon me, madam.

You are not affected by my grief; I see you do not love me—Ah! no doubt, it is impossible for persons of my rank to be beloved for themselves. How unhappy am I!

The Princess could not retain her tears as she spoke.—You are unjust, replied Palmis; do not calumniate

human nature thus ; if a Prince wishes to know whether the praises given him are sincere, and whether he be really beloved, let him ask his own heart ; let him judge himself ; if he disdains flattery, and is capable of friendship, he may be certain he has tender and faithful friends.

Well, Palmis, I detest flattery, and love you.

And I, madam, have no friend in the world as dear to me as you are.

Zeolide answered Palmis by kissing her with transport. Be certain, henceforth, added Palmis, your rank cannot injure the sentiments you are born to inspire. In our secret conversations, your friendship and confidence establishes a perfect equality between us ; you are amiable, and have a feeling heart ; I daily receive new benefits from you, and inclination and gratitude are the sacred ties by which we are for ever united.

Oh, my dear Palmis, cried Zeolide, how happy do you make me ?

You cannot now doubt of my attachment, replied Palmis, and yet I fear this Castle ; remember, madam, that without condescension, without those delicacies and attentions which come from the heart, friendship could not subsist.

Zeolide assured Palmis, that nothing hereafter could ever deprive her of friendship and love.

While the two friends were thus conversing, Philamir did not forget, that the coquette Azema had given him a rendezvous in the Orange-grove ; and it seemed so curious and amazing to read the heart of a woman of that character, that he had not the fortitude to resist the opportunity ; besides, I am certain, said he, Azema cannot seduce me ; Zeolide will know nothing of the affair, and consequently will ask no questions. The latter reflection determined the Prince, and he immediately went towards the grove. Here he found Azema negligently extended on the grass, and in such a manner, as to leave a pretty foot, and the half of a very pretty leg exposed. Her eyes were down-cast, she seemed lost in a profound revery,

revery, and did not appear to perceive the Prince, who gently approached.

Whenever the Prince came up to her, Azema affected surprise, and got up—Have I frightened you, said Philamir?

I wish to assume an air of modesty and surprise, I have been waiting for you above an hour, in the same attitude in which you found me; and I flatter myself, added she, with down-cast eyes as if she was taken by surprise, my leg and foot were noticed.

The Prince smiling, said he had never seen any thing more charming, and Azema hid her face with her fan.

—What is your reason for that, said Philamir?

I wish you to suppose I am blushing.

Pray what think you of me, said Philamir?

I am pleased with you and wish to captivate you.

I wish I had not been pre-engaged.

If so; what then?

Why this would be a critical minute.

Critical! say you; that is pretty.

I have a feeling heart; I doubt I'd be in love.

My imagination is warm which will suit you—I know I'll captivate you.

I am rather doubtful you are so confident.

I shall now let you see my arm, and for that purpose will take off my glove, pretending to be warm.

The Prince then seeing one of her hands, replied, how elegantly turned and white.

I shall now pretend to be offended with the liberty you have taken, and pout, as you see; after which I will turn very sentimental.

She then drew away her hand with dignity, and turned her back on Philamir.—Will you be long in a pet, said he?

Just to draw your attention to my fine shape and flowing ringlets.

Entertained with her schemes, Philamir exclaimed what flowing hair!

Philamir in fact observed she really had fine hair, an elegant shape, and one of the prettiest faces in the world. After a moment's silence, Azema said to him, if you had common sense, this is the instant in which you would fall at my knees, at which I should then appear agitated.

The Prince could not withstand the curiosity he had, to know how Azema would act tenderly, and accordingly did as she described.—So! so! cried she, and are you conquered!

Say, charming girl, what you now think?

I am enraptured—The Princess I have seen and hate.—Oh! what will her vexation be, when she shall know I have robbed her of her Lover, for know it she shall? and soon I will tell her of it myself, for it will delight me to see her despair.—She is so beautiful, and so good, that they speak of nothing here but of her bounty, charms, and virtue; but I will defame her; I will—if in my power her reputation shall suffer.

While she said this she was struck with the indignation she saw painted in the countenance of Philamir. What, Prince, said she, do you suspect me of affectation? Think you there is any exaggeration in the animated sentiments I wish to impress you with.

It were to be wished, said the Prince, rising, that all the monsters of your species were obliged to speak with the same sincerity, that they might only have the influence to occasion dislike and detestation.

Saying this, he immediately withdrew, reflecting as he went on this adventure. Into what swarms, said he, might curiosity alone lead a person of my age, from a wish to see how far such a woman could go. I found myself kneeling to her; I despised her, was not her dupe, yet she amused me; appeared charming, and had she not discovered a soul so base and vile, Zeolide would for an instant have been out of mind.

With these reflections, Philamir turned with melancholy steps towards the Castle, when Gelanor came from a Grove, and said, Come hither, my Lord; come, and if

if possible, stop Zoram and Chrisel from murdering one another.

What is it you say?

In passing two hours ago, across the gardens, they mutually accused each other of madness; but meeting with a guest, who informed them of the virtues of the Castle, they were terrified to think what they had said to the Genius and the Queen, and went privately to concert what measures were best to take. From this conversation they learn, that they really had no friendship for each other; each questioned, was forced to confess they had committed reciprocal wrongs formerly and recently, till they resolved to fight, and are at present within a few yards of us.

Shew me where they are, said the Prince, I will attempt to reconcile them.

My Lord, replied Gelanor, you know not how difficult it is to effect an agreement in the Castle.

The moment the combatants were beginning the attack, Philamir joined them. Forget past grievances—be reconciled.

Chrisel instantly run towards Zoram with a good grace, who met him with open arms. Zoram said, with a smiling countenance, I here vow everlasting malice.

Chrisel immediately rejoined, So do I.

How! exclaimed the Prince?

Notice his baseness, cried Zoram; yet I have the same thoughts.

Keep silence and be quiet, I entreat you, cried Philamir; were it in my power, my Lord, answered Chrisel, to deceive, I would trick the traitor; but we are forced to speak what we think, and cannot conceal our mutual resentment. I see it is useless to strive against the invincible virtue of this Castle, for I am obliged to speak truth. I, who have carried the profound art of dissimulation so far, the fruits of ten years labour are now gone.

The first attack was yours Chrisel, said Philamir; endeavour therefore to say a single word in excuse to Zoram,

ram, who I am sure will be moderate and easily satisfied.

If I should attempt it, said Chrifel, I will only widen the breach.

Fight we must, said Zoram, honour will have it so; deign therefore, my Lord, to be a witness of the combat. I flatter myself, that at the very first wound, however slight it may be, you will run to part us. So saying, they again drew their swords, and the combat began. After a few minutes Chrifel was touched in the hand. Stop, said Philamir, it is sufficient.

With all my heart, replied Chrifel; however, my Lord, be explicit if you think it necessary. I am ready to go on. I am very much attached to life, but it is not so valuable as honour.

These are also my sentiments, said Zoram.

Part then peaceably, said Philamir, honour is satisfied.

Upon this they went away, and Philamir returned towards the Castle.

Phanor and Altemira had just likewise had a most disagreeable conversation. Altemira, notwithstanding her promises could not forbear to question Phanor; and his answers had so surprised and angered her, that the Monarch and Queen almost came to an open rupture, they were not on speaking terms, but in a very bad humour.

The Princess seemed so reserved and distant that Philamir feared she had heard of his adventure in the Orange Grove. The supper was far from cheerful; the unfortunate Aristeus durst not make his appearance, and Zoram and Chrifel shewed not the least eagerness to make their court. Palmis, overwhelmed with grief, was sorrowful and silent; the Queen and the Genius were plunged in a profound revery; and Philamir, devoured by inquietude, trembled as he spoke to the Princess, who would scarcely give him an answer.

The day following, the Prince who had passed the night in reflecting on his situation, determined to demand an explanation from the Princess. He went therefore
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in search of her, and as soon as he found himself alone with her and Palmis, he threw himself at her feet, and said, Oh! pardon me Zeolide; I see you know every thing. I will therefore make a full confession.

What do I know, said the Princess?

The adventure I have had with Azema.

I never heard of it, but must now have the particulars.

The Prince now sincerely repented his indiscretion, but he could not retract; he was obliged to satisfy the jealous curiosity of the Princess; was forced to own that Azema might for a moment have misled him, had not her base heart appeared.

So then, said the Princess, had you not been in this Castle, and could this woman have concealed the atrocity of her mind, and the corruptness of her morals, she might have seduced you.

Forget, cried the Prince, this momentary crime; my repentance is most sincere; you I love, and you only.

She haughtily answered, and I renounce you for ever, unworthy man.

With these words she run to her chamber where she shut herself up with Palmis.

The Princess upon this gave free vent to her tears, and a thousand times repeated Philamir was an ungrateful faithless man, who she would never see more. Palmis long kept silence, but at last was obliged to answer. Alas! madam, said she, what shall I say? were I not here, I might pretend to feel as you do till you would attend and by degrees become reasonable.

Do you think me unreasonable?

I do, madam.

You have little susceptibility.

I have at least experience.

My regard for you is much diminished by your notions.

I vex and provoke you; I foresaw I should; you are under the dominion of passion, and I cannot use these arguments you need.

I cannot bear this—But let me hear you attempt his excuse.

I would

I would not be successful at present, allow me to decline.

I insist on knowing your opinion.

If you are determined, I think that in this affair you have not common sense. Philamir is only twenty; a very pardonable curiosity, and not an intention to deceive you, led him to the rendezvous; that coquette is charming; he for a moment forgot himself, was wrong, felt he was, and repented. This is the only error love can reproach him with; he now knows coquettes, despises them most sincerely, has a sincere love for you, and deserves to be forgiven.

He never shall.

And do you expect perfect fidelity?

I do indeed—Love never can exist if not reciprocal and sincere.

You are right; and therefore is the duration of love so short, it is not possible for a man to have as much delicacy as an affectionate and virtuous woman; and the most tender Lover must soon be discarded, if his mistress has neither credulity nor patience.

You think me whimsical then?

To an extreme.

Have you not then pity for me?

I feel for you; but when I compare your situation to mine, my compassion is not great.

The Lover of a Coxcomb must expect no other.

And those who love a youth under twenty, should lay their account with greater vexations than you have yet known.

What a hard-hearted speech!

'Twas you led me on.

I expressed my thoughts without intending to vex you.

And you have done so very much, which I shall remember hereafter.

I shall never forget your indifference.

You have no justice nor reason in your arguments.

You

You go too far, interrupted Zeolide ; leave me ; I expected consolation, and you aggravate my pains ; begone.

Palmis vexed, retired without speaking.

Zeolide then melting into tears, Philamir has betrayed me, and Palmis loves me no longer. I have lost them both at once——But my mother remains.

The Princess composed herself, and went to the Queen's apartment.——Altemira was the best and tenderest of mothers ; Zeolide told her of all her sorrows, and the Queen partook of her griefs, and even her resentment. How guilty did Philamir especially appear ! He had forgot Zeolide for a moment ; but such, said she, are men. Alas ! did you know, my daughter, what confessions I have torn from your father's bosom.——But Philamir is to me a thousand times still more inexcusable ; yes, my child, the greatest wrong that can be done me is to afflict thee ; thy pangs are the only ones I cannot support with courage ; they distract me.

Dear mother, cried Zeolide, in you I find all the tenderness I experienced before we entered this Castle, you are the only one whose kindness remains.

No, my daughter, there are no illusions mingled with the affections of nature ; a good mother cannot speak more than she feels, nor paint tenderness more passionate than her heart really feels.

Overcome with gratitude, the Princess clasped her mother's neck ; whilst the tears of filial affection gladdened her maternal bosom, and mitigated one another's sorrows.

The Queen and her daughter spent several days in the company of each other ; at last they consented to receive the sage and virtuous Gelanor. The Philosopher incited a spirit of indulgence ; the Queen admitted Phanor ; Zeolide went herself in search of Palmis, and the two friends tenderly embraced each other. Explanations, however, in the Castle of Truth, could not dissipate all the clouds that had risen. Gelanor conducted Philamir to the feet of Zeolide. The Princess wished to assure Philamir

Philamir she had forgotten the past ; but was forced to tell him her love was sometimes lessened, and that she secretly preserved a little resentment and suspicion. The Prince was grieved, and was obliged to own too he was somewhat vexed ; and had it not been for the remonstrances and advice of Gelanor, the two lovers would have fallen out again ; but they preserved appearances although it was impossible to bring them again to their former happiness.

Phanor having questioned Aristeus circumstantially, learned, that if he had not been scrupulously virtuous, he had estimable qualities ; at least, that he possessed probity and real patriotic sentiments.—In Chrifel he discovered a flattering and ambitious Courtier, but a faithful subject ; and as for Zoram, his foible was not wickedness, but folly.

Be conducted by my advice, said Gelanor to the Genius ; treat these Courtiers with indulgence, but grant them no more a blind confidence ; let them henceforth find the only means to obtain your favour is by rectitude and virtue, and they will become new men. When Monarchs have arrived at an age of maturity, and towards the end of their reign, they are then the real formers of Courtiers, and they are either good or bad as the Monarch trains them.

The Genius took his advice, and recalled his three Courtiers, who had been shut up in a corner of the Castle ; but society was no longer agreeable ; no person durst open his lips, lest he should say something impertinent ; and when forced to break this obstinate silence, trembled as he spoke, and seldom uttered a word which was not either ill-timed or offensive. All execrated the Castle, and the only pleasure they could find in it was, to entertain themselves with the many strangers they saw.

One night the Prince, more discontented with Zolide, and sorrowful than ordinary, went to seek Gelanor, and relate his new cause with grief. He had never been in the apartment of this venerable old man, but was conducted thither by an attendant. As soon as he came

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to the door, he opened it, entered, and saw a young beautiful lady, in long mourning robes, sitting by the Philosopher's side, holding a book, and reading aloud. Gelanor appeared embarrassed at the sight of the Prince; Philamir surprised, advanced towards the handsome lady, enquiring if she was lately come.

It is six weeks, my Lord, since I came.

Impossible! six weeks! and nobody yet mentioned your name; you have no doubt, lived concealed; it is not else possible you could have been secret.

Society I am forced to shun, and I am fond of solitude: I see no person here but Gelanor, to whom I listen, by whom I am instructed, and these are all my enjoyments.

Mirza, said Gelanor, the Prince wishes to speak to me.

I am in no hurry, said Philamir.

But I do not wish to lose him; please leave us, Mirza.

She immediately, laying the book on the table, modestly curtsied and retired.

A charming lady, indeed! said the Prince, grace and modesty——Why is she in weeds?

She is a widow.

How long?

Only about a month; her husband was very distressed when he came.

I doubt not beauty is not her only qualification——

Why do you not speak?

Why do you enquire?

Nothing but curiosity.

Be careful of curiosity; you are young, and know not whither it may lead you.

My curiosity is harmless——But say, as to her mental qualifications——

She has many.

Every perfection?

Was it to talk of her you came hither?

Any thing else I had to say was of no consequence——

A repetition of old griefs. I am discontented; Zeolide

is

is no longer the same ; her temper is quite altered, vexed, irritated at nothing—Her reproaches are eternal—I am tired of all this—Mirza has an air of such mildness, such modesty—Is she cheerful at times ?

What is the cause of that question ?—Let us speak of the Princess ; for never since I have inhabited the Castle of Truth, have I read a heart more noble, more pure, more loving than hers.

Was she very fond of her husband ?

Husband !—Of whom do you speak ?

Mirza.

Indeed, Philamir, you are unworthy of the heart of the most charming Princess on earth.—What a difference there is between your sentiments and those of Zeolide ! Among all the men here assembled, and many of them are amiable, Zeolide sees only you ; all eyes are fixed on her, and I know two or three Princes who love her to distraction ; Zeolide only is ignorant of their regard, or pays no attention to it.

Sure, replied the Prince, I love none but Zeolide ; and as I should certainly excite her jealousy, were I to see Mirza again, I engage to come hither again no more.

The Philosopher much commended this intention, which the Prince kept punctually.

Philamir left Gelanor, and visited Palmis, for whom he had conceived a great friendship. Palmis had not the delicacy of Zeolide, consequently could not always in her heart approve her manner of thinking. Being obliged to speak as she thought, when Philamir complained of Zeolide, Palmis, though with regret, could not avoid owning Zeolide was rather strict.

While they were thus conversing together, Zeolide unexpectedly entered. The Prince and Palmis blushed—And I disturb you it seems, said the Princess.

You do, said Palmis.

Tell me of whom were you speaking ?

Philamir was complaining of your unreasonable conduct.

And what said you ?

I agreed.

And

And thus you endeavour to encrease his ill opinion of me?—Were I really capricious and unreasonable, ought my friend to speak thus? and that to——

Remember, madam, we are in the Castle of Truth; could I speak as I wish, my first care should be to persuade the Prince he is always wrong when he thinks any way to your disadvantage.

The Princess could make no answer, but was vexed and silent. Philamir and Palmis durst not venture a word. At last, the Princess, heaving a deep sigh, said, you are really both of you very agreeable company!—Of whom are you meditating, Philamir?

Of the beautiful Mirza.

Who is she?

A beautiful widow, I saw with Gelanor to-day.

And you are doubtless in love with her.

It is Zeolide alone I love.

You are desirous to see the widow again?

I am not: to my love I sacrifice my inclination to enjoy her conversation.

You suppose me jealous then!

Certainly.

Is there no way of concealing my failings? Must you know all my weakness?

Here she burst into tears—Thus, cried the Prince, I never meet with any thing but complainings and tears from you.

No sooner had he thus said, ere he felt the effect they must necessarily produce in the heart of Zeolide, and fell at her feet. Zeolide rejected him with anger; your want of feeling, said she, is shocking.—No, you love me not; or, at least you are incapable of love like mine—Are you not—

I wish I could.

You then confess you do not love.

Do not oppress me, I have not your refined feelings, but as I can I love.

So, so—you only esteem——

I do

I do not use the word Love, because you have forbidden me.

Yes, before we entered this Castle.

On pronouncing these words, Zeolide blushed and turned away her head, to hide her confusion. Philamir smiled, and seized the hand of the Princess, which he tenderly clasped between his own. Zeolide drew back her hand; pray tell me, said she, how it is possible, having only seen this *very beautiful lady* once, you are so very anxious to see her once more.

Say not *very anxious*.

You said, that to me you *sacrificed* this happiness.

Though I did; yet had I the liberty of choosing expressions I would have chosen another.

Thus not seeing her is a *sacrifice*.

Surely; she is amiable, witty, and her company would have given me pleasure; I regret it, and your jealousy I easily observe.

Say you, *my jealousy*, cried Zeolide, with extreme vexation, what expressions! what language!—Yet, alas! it is too true; I have been ridiculously jealous, I condemn myself for it, and were we not in this fatal Castle, you had not known it.

A few days after this conversation, as Philamir was walking, according to his custom, in the Alley of Palm-trees, he perceived, at a distance, the beautiful Mirza, greatly agitated. She approached the Prince, and with a disturbed and timid air, exclaimed, Pardon me, my lord—I am in great distress—I have been seeking a pocket-book, which I have lost above this hour; did you see it?

I regret I did not, replied Philamir, as you are so much concerned for its loss.

My secret is in it.

Your secret, madam!

I have been foolish enough to write down my feelings in that book—but I must say no more—Adieu, my lord, and if by chance you should find my pocket-book, deign to promise you will restore it to me, and above all open it not.

I certainly

I certainly will not, but should I find it, where shall I see you?

In this place, at this hour to-morrow.

With these words she left him, and as she went, twice turned her head to look at the Prince, who followed her with his eyes, and when he lost sight of her he sighed.

In vain the Prince endeavoured to find the pocket-book; he searched the gardens round and round, but unsuccessfully. As, about noon, he was returning towards the Castle, he met the three Courtiers Aristeus, Chrisel, and Zoram, all in conversation. Surprised to see them so intimate, he approached and complimented them on the occasion. Ah! my lord, cried Chrisel, we are united by our mutual apprehensions.

How pray?

Treason against the state would not have more infallibly ruined us—we cannot escape.

What do you mean?

The Genius has this night desired us to attend the recital of a Play he has written.

Perhaps it is a good piece.

Alas, it is execrable. It is six months since we heard it, and made him believe it a chef-d'œuvre.

I understand your difficulty; Phanor has desired you to hear it again, to judge of your sincerity.

No, no; he is perfectly secure, and that is the worst part of the affair; he believes we have flattered him on every possible subject, but only this.

Wherefore then read it again to you?

On account of alterations; there are likewise two celebrated Authors just arrived, whom he intends to astonish and confound, by shewing them his work.

He will be engaged with them.

True, but it is necessary to cry and laugh at this infernal piece; which is impossible here, for it would be immediately seen whether the tears were fictitious or not.

An Author might be deceived perhaps? Is there, in fact, a charm sufficiently strong to prevent an Author from

from being a dupe : Let us only be confident, my friends, and I hope Phanor will not be able to judge by our countenances.

And besides, added Philamir, his attention will be wholly directed towards these newly arrived Authors, who will speak without apprehension, not knowing the charms of this Castle.

My lord, you say well; and in order to keep them in ignorance on this subject till the reading is over, they have been taken to an apartment and separate from the company.

Came they together?

They did not; and as they detest one another, they are kept in separate apartments.

Phanor appeared and the subject was changed.— You spoke of my Play, did you not, said Phanor?

We did, said Zoram, trembling.

I know well you were not speaking against it; for never shall I forget, how you were affected when you heard it first. To-day you will be still more delighted, for I have made such additions! so sublime! our Authors will be somewhat surprised, and as they do not know the virtues of this Castle, I am certain they will testify as much jealousy as astonishment. Will they not?

Your wit will incite no jealousy.

You think so, because of my high station! I assure you that is no impediment. About a year ago, I read this very piece to a man of real wit, but who is himself a writer; well, sir, he could not hide his jealousy; his praise was so cold, so awkward, his perplexity so great, and his sufferings so cruel, he really excited my compassion. The vanity of an author is absolutely unaccountable. As for me, I am just, and do not deceive myself. Often, in the course of my existence, have I been deceived, but never on that subject; never was flattered there— And the reason is, it is impossible.

The Genius's assurance and conversation made the Courtiers hearts shrink within them. After dinner, the Genius sent to inform Learchus and Tarsis he was ready
to

to receive them ; and the former arriving first, Phanor interrogated him concerning Tarsis. I hate him, replied Learchus, though the principle of my hatred obliges me to dissemble ; I wish to seem equitable ; secretly I calumniate, publicly I praise him, but in an artful manner ; it is only to convince the world, not to do him justice.

Notice that ! said the Genius, whispering Chrisel, with a smile of penetration : such is the envy of which I just now spoke, and hence you may imagine how much I know of the human heart.

Immediately Tarsis entered, and, after a moment's conversation, Phanor unfolded his manuscript ; the two authors placed themselves opposite, Phanor thus proceeded.

This play I must tell you Gentlemen, is capital.

That information, replied Learchus, is customary ; a reading is seldom begun, till something like this has first been said ; but you need not fear, my Lord, we shall none of us speak a word of what we think, the highest praises will be showered on you.

Tarsis was astonished to hear him : he could not conceive it possible to carry truth and indiscretion so far.

The Genius smiled—Yes, said he, I can depend upon your sincerity, and am well assured you will be obliged to praise what you shall hear. Know then, Gentlemen, you will melt into tears during the first and second act, laugh at every speech in the third and fourth, and be astonished to find the fifth so sublime. The style is elegant and pure, the characters natural and well sustained, the plot is artfully conducted, and the denouement inevitable.

Honest indeed, cried Tarsis. Authors usually say as much, but it is in a far-fetched and ambiguous manner. For my part, my Lord, I like your proud plain way better ; it is at least more comic, and may bring modesty into fashion.

I acknowledge, replied the Genius, when I am at home, I cannot help speaking thus undisguisedly ; my language

language may astonish, but you will soon see, however, there is nothing really ridiculous in all I have mentioned.

Phanor then began to read, and, as it was necessary to weep during the two first acts, the Courtiers took out their handkerchiefs and hid their faces. The Genius stopped almost at every line : observe, said he, how profound is that reflection ! how original that thought ! how philosophic this ! and spoke so continually, during these interruptions, and between the acts, and praised himself so much, that his auditors had absolutely no room to say any thing. The two Authors seemed very attentive, and finding the device of the handkerchiefs a very happy one, they made use of the same expedient and hid their faces. Phanor triumphed when he beheld all their handkerchiefs in motion at the end of the second act. Come, come, gentlemen, said he, the serious part is over, laughter now comes on.

He then set the example, when he thought it was necessary to laugh. How humorous this is, how full of wit is that, cried he every instant ; there are a few free strokes, and some double entendres, but these are the taste of the age, and we cannot make folks laugh without them ; to unite decency and wit is too hard a task ; and, for my part, I only wish to please, therefore do not perplex myself about morality and good manners, but sacrifice them without scruple, whenever I am induced either by a witty stroke or inviting description.

That is nothing uncommon at all, replied Learchus, we do the same ; it is necessary, however, for form's sake, though a work may be ever so licentious, to scatter a certain quantity of sentiments through it, and moral phrases ; after the most free and indecent traits, one is charmed to see an eulogium on virtue ; such a thing is not expected in such a place, but on that account the surprize strikes the more.

Doubtless, replied the Genius, and you will find I understood this finesse ; for my play ends with four verses, which tell the spectators it has a moral purpose ; though I can assure you, without seeking to raise myself in your esteem,

esteem, I had no other purpose but that of displaying my superior abilities. Now for the fourth act.

Must we continue to laugh, said Tarsis.

So, so, I understand you, Phanor replied ; keep silence and attend.

While he read the three last scenes of this act, Learchus and Tarsis several times endeavoured to burst into a laugh ; and the Genius, reclining towards Zoram, said, softly, do you not observe ? envy will not let them laugh, only from the teeth outwards ; how the hag gnaws their hearts ; this is much more flattering to me, than all the praises they could possibly give, for my pride is equally delicate and penetrating.

When he finished, the Genius rose, rubbed his hands, and smiling, said, these gentlemen will now explain themselves, and we shall then know what ye think.

My Lord, I am perplexed.

Indeed so am I.

I doubt it not, replied the Genius, in a rage.

It is not easy, my Lord, to praise.

For want of expressions, no doubt—this is the highest praise.

How extravagant and wild is this ?

My third and fourth act are out of the common road ; thus you see I did not exaggerate, when I told you you would find humour absolutely run wild. It must be owned Chrisel, added the Genius, it is charming to hear all this said in the Castle of Truth.—What think you, Tarsis ? Why this silence ?

However envious, my Lord—

Well now ! cried Phanor, transported with joy ; there Zoram, did not I predict ?—You hear he is devoured with envy.—But why should I longer abuse the necessity these poor people are under of speaking what they think ? I ought to be satisfied, and not seek to humble men too much to depress them.

The Genius then sent the authors away, conversed some time longer with the Courtiers. He asked no questions for he had no doubts ; he spoke only of his own

own fame, and the vast success his piece must have. So the Courtiers got off for a little terror.

Whenever they got by themselves, was I wrong, said Aristeus, to conceive hopes of escaping the danger? Every illusion vanishes here, except vanity, and that is more mighty than all the Magicians. Love itself is not so blind as an Author hoodwinked by self-conceit and vanity.

The day following the Prince went to the Alley of Palm-trees, where he did not at first find Mirza, but walked about expecting her arrival. After he had walked some time, he saw a sheet of written paper on the grass in a woman's hand; he read, and was amazed to find charming verses, in which Mirza expressed for Philamir a most violent passion.—Oh! unhappy and amiable Mirza, cried the Prince, this no doubt is one of the pages of that pocket-book which thou didst search for with such anxiety. The wind during the night has blown it hither.—Alas! is this then the secret Mirza would hide from me?—This is a distressing discovery indeed?

She immediately came in view, Philamir flew to meet her. Oh! my Lord, said Mirza, I have just found my pocket-book, but there is a leaf gone.—Heavens! what do I see, that very leaf in your hands—And have you read it?—Unfortunate Mirza! now is thy distress at its height.

When Mirza had thus said, she fell on the lawn, and seemed ready to faint; the Prince, quite beside himself, kneeled to assist her. Oh Mirza, cried he, with a broken voice, into what a dreadful distress hast thou plunged me? Is it possible, am I indeed beloved by Mirza.

Harsh Philamir, cried Mirza, since you have read that writing, the silence I had imposed upon my lips is useless; it cannot now conceal my weakness.—Yes, I adore you. Alas! you alone have taught me to know the most violent, the most imperious of all the passions; never shall I banish it my bosom. No, I feel it will follow, or rather precipitate me into the grave. Your's I cannot

cannot be, your faith is plighted, death is my only refuge.

Death ! say you ! Heavens ! cried Philamir, and shall I be the cause of your death ?—Rather let—Oh Mirza ! conceive the horror of my situation—my engagement is sacred.

Too well I know that, cried she ; and were you willing to break it, I never would consent. Zeolide is worthy to participate your happiness. Love shall never make me unjust. Often has Gelanor spoken to me of the Princess, and interested me in her behalf ; not daring to speak in your praise, I listened with pleasure, to the eulogiums of a lady so dear to your heart. No, Zeolide, I cannot hate thee, for Philamir thou sincerely lovest.

Glorious sentiments ; and do you not hate her !

You could not be happy without her, therefore could my life save her's, I would give it.

Mirza, Mirza ! how you fill me with astonishment !

Farewel, Philamir, my heart ! you know I cannot forbear repeating, and remember, *I speak it in the Castle of Truth*, I shall love you to the last breath of life. In this bosom you will ever reign, and over a heart as virtuous and pure as it is noble and affectionate. Incapable of ambition and of jealousy, I might have made you happy if—Farewel, dearest Prince, Farewel.

Alas ! cried the Prince, this I cannot support.—Oh, adorable Mirza ! do you then mean to quit the Castle ? I know your three months are expired, but three weeks I am doomed to remain.

Instantly would I leave this Castle, replied Mirza, were not Gelanor ill ; but to him my attendance is necessary, and I must stay. I insist, however, that you come not to his apartment ; and I conjure you never to confide to any one, the secret you thus have learnt by surprise. You cannot utter a falsehood, but you can be silent.—Again, Prince, farewell for ever.

With these words, Mirza ran with extreme precipitation ; the Prince would have held her, but Mirza, with a commanding and majestic air, forbade him to follow,

M

and

and Philamir was forced to obey. The charms of Mirza's person and mind, and the admiration and compassion she inspired, did but too powerfully combat the fidelity he owed to Zeolide; his vanity too was most potently flattered: to inspire love in the breast of a lady so heroically virtuous, was a triumph which Philamir could not help feeling. Love must rob the beauteous and sublime Mirza of life; the Prince could not doubt it: Zeolide might find consolation. This was a reflection Philamir often made, yet he continued to love Zeolide. He thought the Princess much inferior to her Rival, but at the same time he found an unknown charm about Zeolide, which Mirza did not possess. Zeolide attracted, insinuated, and was deeply engraven in his heart. Mirza dazzled and inflamed the imagination; but she was far above him: she did not enrapture but amaze.

Afraid to discover the secret of Mirza, Philamir avoided Zeolide as much as possible; and perceiving how mortally he dreaded to be alone with her, reason and pride equally bade the Princess not seek a flying Lover. After so much vexation, so many inquietudes, torments and struggles, Zeolide began to suffer less; she had seen the vanity of her ideas, and love was nearly extinguished.

At length the three weeks were at an end, and the day came, when Philamir was to quit the Castle of Truth. Before the Princess was awake, Philamir went to the alley of Palm-trees. He had a strong desire yet again to see Mirza, and had written to conjure her once more to come, yet durst not hope that severe Mirza would consent to receive his last farewell. How great was his joy, when he saw her suddenly appear. Mirza testified the utmost surprize at perceiving the Prince. She would have fled, but was withheld by Philamir. Ah, my Lord! said she, I thought you had already quitted the Castle, and I came again to see this place so dear to me.

You got my line then?

I did not, my lord; what line?

The Prince was vexed to think he owed the happiness of seeing her again to chance alone. Every thing that
gratitude

gratitude or tenderness could inspire the Prince uttered. Mirza wept, and discovered sentiments so heroic, and at the same time so passionate, that the Prince fell enraptured on his knees, and could only express his admiration by his tears. The Prince just at this moment hearing the leaves rustle turned his head, but what was his astonishment and distress when Zeolide appeared?

Zeolide, struck dumb with amazement, stood silent; the confused Philamir durst not speak. At length Mirza, addressing herself to the Princess, related her whole story. You see, madam, added she, I have nothing to reproach myself with. I do not fear, that even my Rival should read my most secret thoughts; and I not only do not hate you, but have a lively sensation of what your feelings must this moment be. I suffer as much from your woes as from my own. Philamir regrets me, this cannot be denied; but it is you he loves, and were he to attempt to break his engagement to you, I would oppose his intentions. I am about to quit, and never see him more. The effort will cost me my life, but to my love duty is superior.

Can it be, cried Zeolide, that a passion which reason cannot approve, may become thus violent in a heart like your's?—Adieu, Philamir, continued the Princess, I restore you your freedom, and at length regain my own; but renouncing you, I renounce the married state.—Be happy, and farewell.

Stay, Princess, cried the distracted Philamir.

Begone, my Lord, said Mirza, with a languishing voice, go recover your mistress, and abandon the wretched Mirza! She no longer loves, I adore—O! that with my heart I could restore you her, since without her life is a burden.

How exalted a soul! Yes, Mirza, you deserve happiness! Yet Zeolide!—I cannot determine my own feelings.

Cruel Prince! do you doubt between a woman who abandons you, and the unfortunate affectionate Mirza.—Should you, now hope has entered my heart, should

you now abandon me, you will behold me expire.— Yet what do I say? Heavens! I am distracted!—Alas! I cannot in this place hide my transports.

Let me away, you shall not leave me, nor shall the best of her sex be by me devoted to death.

What is this I hear! cried Mirza. Is life yet in view?—And will you love me?

Philamir could not answer for his tears—away then, dear Prince, stop not a moment. Fly from this Castle.

Thus saying, she transported, pulled the Prince along with her, who shed a torrent of tears. They approached the fatal gates of the Castle, when they were suddenly met by the venerable Gelanor; Mirza shuddered—Fly, Prince, fly this old man, said she: hear him not!

Stop, cried Gelanor; you cannot fly—The gates are shut.

Mirza, at these terrible words, turned pale, her trembling legs scarcely could support her—Gelanor approached, and seizing her by the arm—Perfidious woman, said he, return *the Talisman*, or I will instantly deliver you to the vengeance of Phanor! Mirza did not hesitate a moment, but taking the *box of crystal* from her pocket gave it to Gelanor, who, turning towards Philamir, said, Now listen to that woman, for whom you have sacrificed Zeolide; speak, Mirza, speak, I enjoin you, cried Gelanor.

If it must be so, said Mirza, I had but the mask of virtue; ambition and vanity alone, inspired me with a desire to seduce this credulous and silly Prince.

Begone, said the Philosopher, you have said enough.

She immediately withdrew: and the Prince, raising his eyes and hands to Heaven, exclaimed, Wretch that I am! What have I done? Oh Zeolide?—Yet how could I conceive such sentiments and so seemingly sincere a passion.

Do you know how that happened?—Pride—With a little less vanity you would have thought, however dangerous love may be, it is not a disease of which people die; you would have known, that not even compassion should obliterate a promise so sacred.

O my

O my Gelanor ! What shall I do ! become my Mentor and Protector.

You are not yet hopeless ; the Genius is informed of every thing, and is this instant endeavouring to prevail on the Princess to grant you a generous pardon ; he will come to seek you, when your appearance will be proper.

In the mean time, said the Prince, tell me how this Talisman, which Phanor gave to the beauteous Agelia, could come into the artful Mirza's possession.

It was shortly thus, replied Gelanor—When Agelia quitted the Castle, as she came to the gate, she took this precious box from Nadir, and gave it me. Gelanor, said she, I give you this Talisman, on condition you never return it to Phanor ; and that you lend it to women, as often as by this means you can preserve them from any great peril. Be you, henceforth the protector of the weaker sex, in this dangerous Castle ; and though you must despise the guilty, yet grant them your pity and assistance.

The amiable Agelia thus spoke, I receive the Talisman, and, conformable to her benevolent intentions, have, for these eighteen years, preserved many wives from the wrath and resentment of their husbands. I sent them the Talisman, and they had too much interest to keep the secret, for me to fear the least indiscretion on their parts ; each woman, with whom the box has been deposited, returned it at departing ; and to this day the secret has never been discovered.

It is about four months ago, as I was walking in the gardens, I perceived a beautiful lady weeping. This lady was Mirza ; who told me she had arrived that morning, and had learnt, by chance, the virtue of the Castle. I have a husband, added she, in a consumption ; he has but a short time to live ; I have made him happy but have deceived him ; should he interrogate me, his last moments will become dreadfully miserable, e'er he dies he may take some method to be revenged.

Mirza got the Talisman from me, and calmed her fears; and her husband, about a month afterwards expired in her arms, blessing heaven for having given him the most virtuous of women for a wife. Mirza, become a widow, conjured me to leave the Talisman in her hands till she departed, that she might preserve her reputation, which an indiscreet question in the Castle might deprive her of, when this precious Talisman was taken from her.

She appeared fond of me; she was amiable and witty, and her company was not without its charms. I felt, however, how dangerous she might be to others, since with so much wit and beauty, she alone had the power of dissimulation. I therefore required she should live in retirement; and when you arrived, I ordered her to avoid you. Her secret was in my keeping, and she found it necessary to submit.

I became distressed, and she, under pretext of nursing me, prolonged her stay. I saw yesterday she was agitated, and had my suspicions, but said nothing. The Physician had ordered me to keep my room a few days longer, which Mirza knew; but this morning I wished to see the Princess before she went, who related to me the heroic scene which just had passed. I instantly sought for Phanor; he ordered the gates of the Castle to be shut; and as the Princess was ignorant of Mirza's perfidy, we agreed not to mention the Talisman to her; that you, my Lord, if so you please, may avail yourself of its virtues to re-establish yourself in the love of Zeolide.

Gelanor then gave Philamir the crystal box; and at the same moment a slave came from Phanor to seek Philamir, who, full of trouble and distress, ran to the chamber of the Princess.

Whenever he saw her, he ran, flung himself at her feet, discovered the deceit of Mirza, and shewed her the Talisman which he had laid upon the table; by hiding this story, and keeping that Talisman, said he, I might have persuaded you I did not go with Mirza, and had
refused

resisted all her seductions ; but though I cannot lose you without the loss of happiness, I would prefer even that to deceit. Yes, Zeolide, I was seduced, inveigled ; I no longer have the same blind and impetuous passion, which I felt before our arrival in this fatal Castle ; but I love you, as I shall for ever love you ; without you I cannot be happy, and it is from you alone, of all the ladies in the universe, I expect happiness.

When he had thus said, his lovely Princess gave the Prince her hand, which he received with transport. The sentiments you discover, said she, are worthy, and all I wish ; and did this Castle destroy no other illusions than those which nourish love, I should not repent my having inhabited it ; but the air we here breathe, is fatal even to friendship. Let us then away, Philamir, from this vile Castle.

Immediately she arose, and went along with the Genius, her mother and lover, to take their chariots.

Just as they were about to leave the gloomy Castle of Truth, they saw, with inexpressible surprise, the crystal walls take another colour, lose their transparency, become opaque, and suddenly transform themselves into porphyry and marble of a radical white.

The Sovereign of the Genii appeared ; and addressed the lovers thus :—

The Charm of this Castle is at an end ; and a new Palace fitted for your reception ; in which the illusions necessary for happiness are to be found. May the Castle of Truth imprint on your memory, the fatal effects of jealousy, and teach you to suppress the first suggestion of foolish curiosity ; may you ever remember, that the soft ties by which hearts are united, are Mutual Confidence and Mild Concessions.

THE
W I D O W
OF
S A R E P T A.
A S A C R E D D R A M A,
IN ONE ACT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Elijah.

The Widow of Sarepta..

Her Son.

*The Scene in the Country of the Sidonians, near to the City
of Sidon.*

EPISTLE to MADAME***.

MADAME,

I M A G I N E how much I value a piece which you particularly honor and prefer, and which you have deigned to think meritorious. How often, while I was writing this drama, were you present to my imagination! Though far different in situation, was it possible, while tracing the character of the tenderest of mothers, of a woman equally benevolent and virtuous, not unceasingly to recollect so august, so affecting a picture, of those high qualities I was endeavouring to describe? Happy the author, Madam, who is sufficiently near so natural, so noble, an original. How great his advantage, who thus can behold virtue in all its effulgence, and observe traits equally amiable, seducing, and sublime.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following is the Story, taken from the Holy Scripture, which has furnished the Subject of the Widow of Sarepta.

AHAB King of Israel espoused Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, King of the Sidonians, and, led astray by that Princess, worshipped idols. The Prophet Elijah, by the command of God, declared to the King that, for several years, neither dew nor rain should water the earth. Elijah, being persecuted by Ahab, was obliged to fly and hide himself near the brook of Cherith, beside Jordan. After some time the brook dried up, there being no rain in the land; and the Lord ordered the Prophet to go to Sidon, a city of the Sidonians. Being come near the city, he met a poor woman, gathering of sticks: he asked her for water to drink, and she went strait to fetch it. He called her back to beg a morsel of bread; but she answered, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; and behold I am gathering two sticks that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat and die; and Elijah said unto her, Fear not, go, and do as thou hast said; but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and thy son; for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

After this the widow's son died. Elijah raised him again, and restored him to his mother, who said to the Prophet, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth."

T H E
W I D O W
O F
S A R E P T A.

She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh with her hands.
She stretcheth forth her hand to the poor, yea, she reacheth forth
her hands to the needy.

Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain ; but a woman that fear-
eth the Lord, she shall be praised.

Prov. chap. xxxi. ver. 13, 20, 30.

S C E N E I.

*The Widow seated at her door, spinning, and her Son by
her side.*

The Widow,

(Aside, after having looked earnestly at her Son.)

HOW pale he is !——How fallen away !——Poor
boy.—(*Aloud*). My son, dost thou not find the
morning air refreshing, the day more serene than hereto-
fore ?

Son. I breathe with pain, and feel the sun already hot
and burning.

Widow. Wilt thou walk among the trees ?

Son. I cannot walk.

Widow, (aside.) Alas !

Son. When, my mother, shall we again behold verdure
and flowers ?

Widow. Now is the season in which they used to ap-
pear and flourish ; yet, now, we hear no more the war-
bling of birds ; bare are the trees, and the dry flowers
fall in dust on the scorched grass ; fountains, brooks,
and rivers, cease to flow ; in vain would we seek the
cool

cool shade of the forest ; rain moistens not the earth, and plants and fruits, men and beasts, all languish, all droop and die.—Such are the plagues by which we are afflicted.—Long too have they endured.—All nature is changed ; the fatal revolution, at once, deprives us of rain, refreshing rays, abundance and health.

Son. And shall we then, my mother, no more behold the spring.

Widow. Oh ! my Son.

Son. I still remember those happy days when the trees looked so green, so beautiful the meadows.—Never shall I forget the water flowing from the well and falling from the high rock. Yonder it was, I see the place ; but the water is no more, the rock alone remains, and as I look towards it, the sight makes me melancholy.—The flowers too which I so often have gathered with delight—Our vine-trees, our olives, and our young lambs—

Widow. Alas ! dear child, thou, already, art familiar with woes unknown to infancy or youth ; painful remembrance and bitter regret.

Son. And the bitterest is, my mother, to recollect how once your maidens came about you, worked for you, waited on you, obeyed you.—Alas ! now you are alone.

Widow. Alone !—Am I not with thee, my son ! Thou, to me, art every thing.

Son. Could I but assist you in your labours !—I am old enough, and yet I want the strength—

Widow. And dost thou pity me ? Dost thou weep over my humiliations ? Thou ! sole object of all my inquietude.—Oh, my son, still should I be happy, still supremely blest, would Heaven but restore thy health.

Son. You weep—Do you not hope, my mother, to see me recover ?

Widow. Dreadful question ! Ah ! did I doubt it, would it be possible for me to live ?

Son. And yet I am very weak.—Could you but lead me to the city, then would I go to the temple of Baal, and kneeling with you, my mother, pray to our gods.

Widow.

Widow. 'To our gods!—Ah! my son, them have I ceased to revere: long have I known the errors of our absurd belief, and the worship of Baal—Not virtue doth our religion inspire, but vice it authorises.—No, doubt not, my son, that our priests are impostors and our gods false.

Son. Whom then shall we invoke?

Widow. Him who hath created the universe.

Son. But who shall inform us how to pay him worship?

Widow. He himself hath engraven his worship in our hearts, hath inspired us with the love of good, and the hatred of evil. Him we obey when we obey the dictates of conscience.

Son. But how is he to be served? How should we pray unto him?

Widow. Alas! I know not; but the virtuous and submissive heart, that desires this knowledge, ought to preserve the hope that it shall sometime be enlightened.

Son. Him the Sidonians must then offend!

Widow. Too much they have merited his wrath, by their crimes and inhuman sacrifices.—The dreadful dearth which now desolates the land, sickness and famine, nay, all the ills under which we at present groan, are but, perhaps, the fearful effects of an unseen power, whom I know not, and whom they disobey. It is rumoured that the original cause of all our misfortunes was the union of Jezebel, our king's daughter, with Ahab, King of Israel. Altars hath she built in Samaria, and there our idols are worshipped; from that fatal moment our calamities began.

Son. The gods of Israel then are wrathful against us!

Widow. One God, alone, do the Israelites adore. From him, it is said, they have received holy laws, benevolent precepts, and commandments pure and just.—Ah! if it be true that the God of Israel commands us to be virtuous, he shall be my God.

Son. Hear you, my mother, how the wind whistles?—And yet how scorching!—What whirlwinds of dust!

Widow.

Widow. A fearful tempest is rising.—Let us go in.

Son. The wind is louder.——Thick clouds are gathering.

Widow. Let us make haste.—Come, my son, lean upon my arm.

Son. I cannot stand.

Widow. Oh Heavens! And am I too weak to carry thee?

Son. Do not weep, my mother.—Help me, a little, and I shall be able to get to the door.

Widow, (bearing him in her arms.) Come, dear boy.

Son, (stepping slowly with her.) What a storm!—The trees bend and the branches break.

Widow. Take courage, come.

Son. Hark!—I hear strange sounds and groans!

Widow. They come from the wood!

Son. Some one, no doubt, is in want of help.—Run, my mother.

Widow. I cannot leave thee here; when I have brought thee into the house, I will go.

Son. Come, then.

Widow, (opening the door.) I will presently come back to thee.

Son. Do not be uneasy, I feel myself better. I only want repose: I will lie down and sleep.

Widow. And oh! may thy sleep be sweet and refreshing. *(She kisses her son, shuts the door after her, and goes towards the wood.)*

S C E N E II.

Widow.

DEAR child, how many pangs, how many mortal inquietudes doth thy present declining health occasion me! *(Still advancing towards the wood.)*——The clouds disperse; the wind abates.—I hear no more those plaintive cries which seemed to call for aid.—Yet, certainly, it was no illusion. My whole soul was moved, for I heard the voice of distress. *(She stops and looks round.)*

—No

—No one can I see.—I will return to my son. Ah! if his sleep be sound and peaceful, how happy shall I be while I behold him tranquil and at ease!—Softly will I sit and work by his side.—Yet, no! at the whirl of the spindle he may awake.—Silent I must look. I shall not be obliged to restrain my tears, they may flow, at least, without constraint, for, sleeping, he will not see them flow.—(*She raises her clasped hands towards Heaven.*)—Oh! Thou whom know I do not, but whom to know I desire! Thou who speakest intelligibly to my heart! Thou who hast created the heavens and the earth! Ah! what relief to my pangs, what delight to my soul, could I adore thee, pray to thee, invoke thy blessings on my child, and could I know my prayers were heard!—Only by thy works I know thee, thy infinite power: and, thy power being infinite, thou thyself must be beneficent.—Look down upon thy servant, enlighten her eyes, and restore her son to health.—Innocent hath been my life, and truth my constant pursuit.—No, thou wilt not reject my prayers, thou wilt deign to instruct thy handmaid, and to preserve her son.—Hark! I hear the sound of feet.—Some one in the wood.—I will run. (*She goes towards the wood.*)—A venerable Seer approaches!—Weak and exhausted he appears! Let me, if I can, support his trembling steps.

S C E N E III.

Widow, Elijah.

Elijah.

WHERE am I?—In what wild place?

Widow. You are in the land of the Sidonians, near the city of Sarepta. If you want rest, come into my cottage.

Elijah. Who art thou?

Widow. A widow I am: an only son is all my wealth, and I live by the labour of my hands.—Plenty and happiness once were mine, nor did I make an ill use of my wealth; and, though now I am poor, yet I despair not.

Elijah.

Elijah. By what reverse of fortune art thou thus?

Widow. Public calamity. The earth deprived of dew and rain is become steril. The cares of agriculture are abandoned, because they are useless; and famine, that most dreadful scourge, has destroyed all rank and distinction. The rich is now but as the poor; and the lords of large possessions die, like the indigent, for want of bread. The courtier, in his palace, learns, at length, the vanity of luxury and magnificence, and the real and solid value of Nature's gift. Such are the woes which desolate and distract our afflicted land.

Elijah. Oh people, blind, iniquitous and perverse!—Break in pieces your idols, pull down your altars, the works of wicked hands and impious! Acknowledge the true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and he, long suffering and ever merciful, shall pardon you, and ye shall live!

Widow. What sayest thou?—The true God!—Him whom I would adore!—Canst thou instruct me? Knowest thou him? Is he thy God?—He hears me not!—He seems in pain.

Elijah. Strength forsakes me.—Fatigue—Thirst. —

Widow. Alas! all I have is a little oil and meal, which I preserve for my son.

Elijah. Hath thy son remained many days, like me, without food?

Widow, (aside, beholding Elijah.) How pale!—He reels.—I cannot behold him perish—And, yet, my son! should he wake hungry—Alas! my rent heart——

Elijah. Help, help!—My life is in thy hands! Help, help!

Widow. Oh! my son!—Alas! venerable stranger, as the Lord thy God liveth, I have no bread; nothing have I but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse.

Elijah. Fear not; go and make me a cake thereof, and bring it me, and after make for thee and thy son; for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal

meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

Widow. He surely is a man of God, his words are inspiration.—Yes, his God is the true God, to whom all things are possible. I feel a power and a light divine; a faith that fortifies my heart, that ordains me not to suffer this holy man to perish at my door for want.

Elijah. Go, I will wait for thee here; go, and doubt not the puissance or the merciful goodness of the God of Israel.

Widow. Yes, holy man, what I have I will give unto thee.

S C E N E IV.

Elijah.

THIS woman is a Sidonian, uninstructed, ignorant of the just and sublime law of Jehovah: From the love of virtue she acts.—Oh! God of my fathers, deign to make her truly worthy of thee; shed the beams of divine truth in her heart, and multiply thy blessings on the benevolent, this hospitable widow.—What piercing, what lamentable cries are these!

(The Cottage door is open, and Elijah hears the Widow, within, who exclaims)

Widow. My son! My son!—Oh! my son! my son!

Elijah. What misfortune! What misery!

S C E N E V.

Elijah, Widow.

Widow, (distractedly.)

HE is gone!—'Tis past—My all, my life, my soul is fled!—Oh! my son, my son!—*(She falls on a grass bank beside the door.)*

Elijah. Is thy son dead?

Widow. Thou, unhappy stranger, didst detain me? breathless he lies! His last sigh escaped and I received it not!—Oh! my son, my son! But I will return, dead,

dead, I will still gaze upon him, and expire by his side !

Elijah. Stay—Listen and be patient.—A power supernatural comes over me, and restores me all my strength ! Unfortunate but virtuous mother, believe and pray : kneel with me and invoke the God of Israel.

Widow. Wherefore invoke him ?—My son is dead !

Elijah. Yet, he can make him live.

Widow, (falling with enthusiastic fervency on her knees.)
Oh God ! Oh God ! Oh God !

Elijah. God of my fathers ! Jehovah, omnipotent in mercy, hear my prayer ; behold the sighs and groans of this poor widow, give her life, light, and happiness.—Yea ! Thou hearest me !—I feel thee !—Thy spirit is upon me !—*(Rising hastily towards the cottage.)*

Widow, (rising also.) Oh ! may this—may this be !

Elijah. Beware of doubt.—Hope every thing, and follow me not. *(Elijah goes into the cottage.)*

SCENE VI.

Widow. Hope ! May I ? Is it possible I may hope !—What he, whom I have beheld dead, may he live again !—Yes, he may.—Great God, I cannot doubt thy power, or thy bounty supreme.—Yet, alas ! what have I done to deserve a miracle from thee ?—*(She listens.)* God of Mercy !—It is his voice !—I hear him.—My son ! My son ! *(Flies precipitately to the cottage door.)*

SCENE VII. and Last.

Elijah leading the Son by the hand, Widow.

Widow.

MY son !

Son. (running into her arms and clinging round her neck.)
Oh, my mother !

Widow. And livest thou ! breathest thou ! Do I behold thee ! Do I clasp thee in my arms ! *(holding him at arms length, and looking stedfastly upon him.)* Yes ! 'Tis thee !—'Tis my son !—'Tis thee, and health blooms upon

upon thy cheek. (*She falls upon her knees to Elijah, who raises her.*) Man of God! whose gracious image thou bearest, whose minister of mercy thou art, now I know that thy God is the true God, the God I sought, the God whom, even in error, I adored!—Instruct, enlighten me, tell me how I best may worship, best may express, best may show how fully I feel his goodness!

Elijah. Thy present gratitude is the sacrifice and the worship which pleaseth him best.

Widow. And thou, venerable sage, prophet of God, be thou my guide, henceforth thy precepts will I adore!

Elijah. Adore Jehovah. Mere man am I, persecuted by a barbarous king, an impious queen, to the deserts I fled. Hither the Lord ordained me to come; hither, to thy succour, his Almighty hand directed me. To Elijah he hath given the glory of explaining his law to thee, virtuous and benevolent. The high crimes of the haughty Jezebel have kindled the wrath of the Lord; but, though to the wicked terrible, to the meek and righteous he is merciful and good. He hath restored thy son, to health restored him, and thee he will preserve from that dreadful famine that doth affect this land. The oil and the meal, which thou reservedst for thy son, thy hospitality and faith would have bestowed on me, who, though suffering, yet, to thee a stranger; that oil and that meal shall endure so long as the dearth endures, shall give subsistence to thee, thy son, and all those who shall hither come to implore thy pity.

Widow. Bounty of heaven!—All! may I succour all?—It shall be my duty then to seek the wretched.—Oh happiness unhopèd!

Elijah. As durable, as pure shall it be; and, though thou diest, thy name shall never die. Thy hospitality, thy faith, and the rewards bestowed on them by the Lord God of Israel, these, as examples, shall remain so long as the earth, the sea, and all therein remain.

As the greater part of ADELA and THEODORE are Letters so connected on the subject of Education, that a selection of a few of them would be of little service, it is hoped the following concise view of a very valuable part of her system, will be acceptable.

COURSE OF READING,

PURSUED BY

A D E L A I D E,

From the Age of Six Years to Twenty-two.

ADELAIDE could read perfectly well at *six* years old; but then she only read by the way of lesson, and did not understand what it was about. And though by that time she knew the History of the Bible, she learned it solely, by means of the Magic Lanthorn. She had also some notion of Geography, which she learned by means of Perspective Glasses; and she had seen Pekin, Canton, Moscow, Kola, &c. a thousand times. She not only knew the capitals, but the principal rivers, and other things worth notice; which she learnt in the same manner, by amusing herself with Madame d'Almane and Miss Bridget, in looking through the Perspective Glafs. She spoke French and English equally well. Such were *Adelaide's* improvements, when she arrived in Languedoc. Although she appeared to have both penetration and sense at that age, yet Madame d'Almane did not think it would be any advantage to her to read those little Tales, which are composed for children in their infancy. She thought it better to give her six months preparation for reading them, by teaching her to read little true stories still better adapted to her capacity, but which were not worthy the notice of the public. Madame d'Almane had five or six sets of these little works
printed;

printed; but took care to conceal her being the author. When she arrived in Languedoc, she waited for a proper opportunity to produce them; for she would not give them to her daughter, but at the time when they might be useful. *Adelaide* was very impatient to read to herself; and her eagerness was increased by deferring to satisfy it.—However, one day, that she had been contradicting her brother, there came a pedlar to the Castle with books, one of which she was permitted to choose: she did not fail to take the only one which was bound; indeed it was in Red Morocco, with a gilt edge; when she had purchased it, she found it was called, *The History of Cephisa*, a charming little girl, very mild and obedient, who never contradicted her brother in her life. She read this history with great delight; and that very evening *Adelaide* asked her brother's pardon, and assured him she would never more behave ill to him. A week after came another pedlar, and brought another book, which was a new lesson *. In short, in six months *Adelaide* had read, and got by heart, all the little neatly bound books, in which were *Madame d'Almane's* histories.

At seven years old she had read the Bible, the Conversation of *Emilius*, and *Les Hockets Moraux*, by *Monf. Monget*; which are pleasing Tales in verse, dedicated to *Mademoiselle d'Orleans* and *de Chartres*; these
Adelaide

* *Madame d'Almane* made use more than once of this indirect method of giving instruction. When *Adelaide* left Languedoc to return to Paris, she was ten years old, and during that Winter she used every morning at breakfast to read aloud the Paris Gazette. During this Winter, she read near sixty false sheets, which her mother had caused to be printed expressly for her, and substituted instead of the real news-papers; *Adelaide* and *Theodore* read all these with inexpressible delight. They contained pleasing histories; proofs of great courage, benevolence, filial affection, &c. &c. and many other similar lessons, which were thought necessary for the particular occasion.

Adelaide got by heart. At seven years and half she read Plays and Dialogues for children, written by *Madame de la Fite*, a work in two volumes, equally valuable and interesting, as well for the use it is of to children, as by the wit and graces with which it abounds. At eight years old she read the seven volumes *des Annales de la Vertu*; *La Geographie comparee*, by *Monf. Mentelle*, and a Treatise on Heraldry. By this time *Adelaide* began to write a large hand pretty well, and instead of giving her one single sentence for a copy, she had a different page every day. The first she began with was *le Gatechisme Historique*, which lasted her six months; and the next six months she wrote *l'Abrege de la Geographie*, by *Monf. le Ragois*.

At nine years old she wrote *de l'Histoire Poetique*, and *l'Instruction sur les Metamorphoses d'Ovide*, also by *Ragois*; which lasted her till she was ten, when she read, and acted, five Comedies of the *Theatre d'Education*: *Agar dans le Desert*; *les Flacons*; *la Colambe*; *l'Enfant Gate* and *l'Aveugle de Spa*. To these were added *Elements de Poesie Francoise*, three Volumes in Twelves, and *Robinson Crusoe*. By this time her lessons for writing were an Abridgement of *The Beauties of History*, as she then began to write English, which before she could only speak. When she had written her English copy, we made her read it in order to pronounce it properly; and this taught her to read English; so that one lesson contained three, Writing, History, and the English Language.

At eleven years old she wrote over again all those books, which we have just mentioned; and she knew by heart the *Annales de la Vertu* so much the better, for having seen in the tapestries and magic lanthorns the most remarkable incidents in history. She also read at this age, *Rollin's Ancient History*, *The Imitation of Jesus Christ*, *The Father's Instructions to his Children*; and *le Theatre de Compastroms*.

At

At twelve years old she received the Sacrament; she read *les Quotars fines de l'Homme*, by Monsieur Nicole; an excellent book, which, read in early youth, makes an impression not to be effaced. *Echard's Roman History*; *le Theatre de la Grange-Channel*; and *Macaulay's History of England*.

At thirteen she read the *Princesses of Celues*, *Zaide*, *Cleveland*, the *Dean of Coleraine*, *Anecdotes of the Court of Philip Augustus*; the rest of the *Theatre d'Education*; a book on *Mythology*, by *Madame d'Almane*, and the *Travels of Cyrus*; and in the course of this year she wrote, for her copies, a Collection of Poems taken from different authors of the second rank; such as *Bertaut*, *Godeau*, *Pavillon*, *Desmahis*, &c. At fourteen she read *Tremblay's Instructions from a Father to his Children*, a good book, which contains a course of instruction well written upon all subjects; *The History of France*, by *Velly*, &c. *le Theatre de Marivaux*, *le Spectacle de la Nature*, by *Monf. Pluche*; *Histoire des Insectes*, in two volumes, and *Lady M. W. Montague's Letters*. *Adelaide* began at this time to read Italian, which she already spoke very well, and set out with the translation of the *Peruvian Letters*, and *les Comedies de Goldani*. She continued writing the Poems before mentioned, and began to answer the Letters written by *Madame d'Almane*, as mentioned in the third volume, and also took extracts of what she read.

At fifteen she read *les Synonymes de l'Abbe Girard*, *la Maniere de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit*, one volume. *Reflexions critiques sur la poesi & sur la peinture*, by the *Abbe Dubes*; *Histoire de Pierre le Grand*; *Voltaire's Universal History*; *Theatre de Destouches*; *Theatre de la Chaussee*; *D. Quichotte*; *la Poetique de Marмонтel*; *Hume's History of England*, and the works of *Metastasio* in their original languages; and this year she only wrote her copies with a master twice a week; she finished the Answers to *Madame d'Almane's Letters*; and made extracts from the English and Italian Histories.

At

At sixteen she read Virgil's *Æneid* and his *Georgica*, translated by Mous. l'Abbe de l'Isle; Madame Sevigny's *Letters*; *Fontaine's Fables*; Translation of the Greek Theatre; *Theatre de Crebillon*, and some detached pieces, as *Marlius, de la Fasse*; *Araine*, and the *Compte d'Essex, de Thomas Corneille*; *la Metromaine*; *Ines de Castro*; the translations of Plautus and Terence; *Clarissa*, and Thomson's *Works* in English; *Tasso's Jerusalem, Amintas and Pastor Fido* in Italian.—This year *Adelaide* left off writing copies, and only wrote extracts, and made verses. She also began again to compose answers to the Letters Madame d'Almane had written; and in six months she had written the forty answers.

At seventeen she read *Voltaire's Age of Lewis Fourteenth*, and his *History of Charles the Twelfth*; the *Poems of Madame Des Houlieros*; the *Works of Gresset*; *Theatre du Grand Corneille*; *Theatre de Racine*; *Theatre de Voltaire*; *les Sermons de Bourdaloue*; and *Sir Charles Grandison and Pamela* in English; with *Ariosto* in Italian. She made extracts from *History*, and from *Corneille*; she read *Voltaire's* Edition of the latter, in order to judge of it herself. When she had made her remarks, Madame d'Almane corrected her opinions, by shewing her *Voltaire's*; at the same time making her observe, that his were not all equally just*. Between
eighteen

* Among others his criticism on that beautiful imprecation of *Camilla* in *Les Horaces*; and on that verse in *Rodogune*—Fall on me Heavens, provided I am revenged.—Where he has this strange note—We know the Heavens do not fall.—This verse in *Rodogune* is admirable, because it is put in the mouth of *Cleopatra*, whose character it marks, and prepares us for the most atrocious actions. After such an imprecation, we are not surprised to see her sacrifice herself to her revenge.—Take away this single line and the catastrophe of *Rodogune*, the most beautiful on the Theatre, will appear no longer probable.—The Author of *Zaire* ought to feel, better than any one, the superior merit of the above
N
excellent

eighteen and nineteen she read *Theatre de Moliere*; *Boileau's Works*; *Regnard*; *Dufreni*; the Poems of *J. B. Rousseau* *; *Sermons de Massillon*; with the *Spectator* in English, and *Petrarch* in Italian.

After the marriage of *Adelaide*, *Madame d'Almane* engaged her to continue her reading as usual, which she did at her toilet; and as she received no company at her house for two years after she was married, she had time to pursue her studies from eighteen and a half to twenty years and a half. She read during that time *Letters on Education*; *Emilius* and *Odyssey*; *Buffon's Natural History*; *Telemachus*, *Flecbier*, *Bossuet*, *Mascaron*; *les Caracteres de la Bruyere*; *Rocheboucault's Maxims*; and in English, *Pope's Works*, and *Locke*, including the *Iliad* of *Pope* so elegantly translated; with the *History of Italy* by *Guiciardini*, and the *Works of Dante*, in Italian.

From the age of *twenty* and a half to *twenty-two*, she read the *Pensees de Pascal*; *Gil Blas*; *Memoirs of the History of France*; *Hamilton's Works*; *Treatise on Wisdom*, by *Charron*; *Persian Letters*; and *l'Esprit des Loix*; in English, *Milton* and *Shakespeare*, and in Italian, *La Jerusalem delivree*.

At *twenty-two* *Madame d'Almane* gave her a list of all the New Works which were worth reading; and advised her to read over again the books she had been accustomed

excellent line.—He makes Orosmanes say—I am not jealous; if I ever should be . . . this beautiful break implies a threat, which prepares us for every thing that may happen; it announces the character of Orosmanes, and makes way for the catastrophe. Take away this single line from the Play, and the murder of Zaire will inspire only astonishment and horror, and the catastrophe will appear no longer probable.

* *The great merit of Rousseau's Poems depend less on his thoughts than on his harmony. It is necessary to have read a great deal of Poetry in order to taste the beauties of his; and for this reason Madame d'Almane was not in haste herself to give them her daughter.*

customed to from sixteen to twenty-two; which would last her, with some additional books which it was necessary she should be acquainted with, such as *Fontenelle's Plurality of Worlds*, *les Discours Academiques*, and some others, till she was seven or eight-and-twenty. This plan of Study seems to be carried to a great length; yet it does not take in many works of which there are extracts to be met with in the seven volumes of *Annales des Vertu*; such as the Histories of Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Poland, Turkey, Arabia, and Russia. It is remarkable that this plan of reading, at the beginning, only required half an hour each day; and only three quarters of an hour from the age of thirteen to twenty-two, even supposing they did not read fast. There are only two or three of the works which are voluminous; * and there is not a year where one has more than fifty volumes to read. It must be observed that Plays are read in much less time than other books, because the names of the persons take up a great part of the room.

The studies of *Theodore* were much more extensive. Many Latin Books, of which *Adelaide* never read even the translations, as well as many books on Laws and Political Subjects, were comprised in his reading. Yet there was not more time employed on that account. *Theodore*, from the age of sixteen to twenty-two, read every day about two hours and a half. He learned neither music nor singing; nor did he draw so long at a time as his sister. When the weather was not fit for walking, *Adelaide* amused herself with embroidery, or other little works of that kind, and *Theodore* read, played at billiards, &c. So that *Theodore* had read infinitely more than *Adelaide*; yet she will meet with very few women who have so much knowledge as herself, or whose ideas are more clear and just; for she has learned and digested every thing she has read.

A Mother, who wishes to adopt this method of studying for her daughter, and who at the same time does

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not

* *Buffon's Natural History*, *Rollin's Ancient History*, and *the History of France*.

not intend her to learn English or Italian, will have very little to alter. It will only be necessary to substitute translations from the principal Works in those languages. Therefore it will only be dispensing with seven books, which are not absolutely necessary to be read, and which *Adelaide* had learned by her Copies from ten years old to thirteen. These books are the Beauties of History; Father's Instructions; Macaulay's History; the Travels of Cyrus; Lady M. W. Montague's Letters; the Peruvian Letters; and Goldon's Comedies. Instead of these, you may take *Modeles Militaires*, in two volumes, *Histoire generale des Voyages*, abridged by Mons. de la Harpe, twenty-one volumes; the Translation of the Fables of Phædrus; and Advice from a Mother to her Daughter, and to her Son, by Madame de Lambert. One may add more French books, if one does not teach them English, because one can read much faster in one's own language, unless one is quite perfect in others, and then it makes little or no difference. But when *Adelaide* read English and Italian, they were not so easy to her as her own tongue; and therefore I have substituted for the foreign works, more voluminous Works in French.

THE
 QUEEN OF THE ROSE
 OF
 S A L E N C Y.
 A C O M E D Y,
 IN TWO ACTS.

La vertu sous la chaume attire nos hommages.

CARDINAL DE BERNIS.

THE PERSONS.

The Lord of Salency.

The Prior of Salency.

Monica, an old Peasant of Salency.

Gertrude, Daughter of Monica.

Helen, Daughter of Gertrude, named a Candidate for the Crown of Roses.

Theresa, }
 Ursula, } *named Candidates for the Crown.*

Basil, the Son of Gertrude.

Margery, a Neighbour of Gertrude's.

Mrs. Dummer, the Wife of a Grocer, in the Town of Noyon.

Mary, Daughter of Mrs. Dummer.

The Bailiff, a silent Person.

Companies of young Salencian Girls, Musicians, &c.

The three Candidates should be clothed in white, with their hair hanging loose.

The SCENE is at SALENCY.

T H E
QUEEN of the ROSE of SALENCY*.

A C T I.
S C E N E I.

The Scene represents a large Chamber in the house of a Peasant, with the press on one side.

Margery, Helen.

Margery.

WELL, thank God, however, I have got back to the festival.

Helen.

* *The author imagines that some particulars about Salency, and the respectable institution of the festival of the Rose, will be read with pleasure; and it is impossible to gratify the reader's curiosity on that subject in a more interesting manner, than by copying a memorial written in favour of the institution, which appeared in 1774, signed by M. Target counsellor and M. Target attorney, and from which the Author has taken every thing that relates to the Queen of the Rose and Salencians.*

There is still a part of the world where simple genuine virtue receives public honours. It is in a village of Picardy, a place far distant from the politeness and luxury of great cities. There an affecting ceremony, which draws tears from the spectators, a solemnity, awful from its venerable antiquity and salutary influence, has been preserved notwithstanding the revolutions of twelve centuries; there the simple lustre of the flowers with which innocence is annually crowned, is at once the reward, the encouragement, and the emblem. Here, indeed, ambition preys upon the young heart, but it is a gentle

Helen. You have been a great while at Noyon ?

Margery. Yes, indeed, owing to my uncle's illness ; but now he is almost recovered ; says he to me, Margery, this is the eighth of June, go your ways to Salency and

gentle ambition: the prize is a hat decorated with roses. The preparations for a public decision ; the pomp of the festival ; the concourse of people which it assembles ; their attention fixed upon modesty, which does itself honour by its blushes ; the simplicity of the reward, an emblem of those virtues by which it is obtained ; the affectionate friendship of the rivals, who, in heightening the triumph of their queen, conceal in the bottom of their worthy hearts the timid hope of reigning in their turn : all these circumstances united, give a pleasing and affecting pomp to this singular ceremony, which makes every heart to palpitate, every eye to sparkle with tears of true delight, and makes wisdom the object of passion. To be irreproachable, is not sufficient : there is a kind of nobleness, of which proofs are required ; a nobleness not of rank and dignity but of worth and innocence. These proofs must include several generations, but on the father and mother's side ; so that a whole family is crowned upon the head of one ; the triumph of one is the glory of the whole ; and the old man in grey hairs, who sheds tears of sensibility on the victory gained by the daughter of his son, placed by her side, receives, in effect, the reward of sixty years spent in a life of a virtue.

By this means, emulation becomes general for the honour of the whole ; every one dreads, by an indelicate action, to dethrone either his sister or his daughter. The crown of roses promised to the most prudent, is expected with emotion, distributed with justice, and establishes goodness, rectitude, and morality in every family ; it attaches the best people to the most peaceful residence.

Example, powerful example, acts even at a distance ; there the bud of worthy actions is unfolded, and the traveller in approaching this territory perceives, before he

and see the coronation, and come back to-morrow.— Upon which, by my faith, I immediately set out; and, by good luck, I fell in with a lady, the wife of a great grocer in town, who was likewise coming to the coronation,

enters it, that he is not far from Salency. In the course of so many successive ages, all around them has changed; they alone will hand down to their children the pure inheritance they received from their fathers: an institution truly great from its simplicity; powerful under an appearance of weakness; such is the almost unknown influence of honours; such is the strength of that easy spring by which all men may be governed: sow honour, and you will reap virtue.

If we reflect upon the time the Salencians have celebrated this festival, it is the most ancient ceremony existing. If we attend to its object, it is perhaps the only one which is dedicated to the service of virtue. If virtue is the most useful and estimable advantage to society in general, this establishment, by which it is encouraged, is a public national benefit, and belongs to France.—

According to a tradition, handed down from age to age, St. Medard, born at Salency, proprietor rather than lord of the territory of Salency, (for there were no fiefs at that time,) was the institutor of that charming festival, which has made virtue flourish for so many ages. He had himself the pleasing consideration of enjoying the fruit of his wisdom; and his family was honoured with the prize which he had instituted, for his sister obtained the crown of roses.

This affecting and valuable festival has been handed down from the fifth century to the present day. To this rose is attached a purity of morals, which, from time immemorial, has never suffered the slightest blemish; to this rose are attached the happiness, peace, and glory of the Salencians.

This rose is the portion, frequently the only portion, which virtue brings with it; this rose forms the amiable
and

tion, and she brought me along with her. O she is a brave woman ; she made me prate to her all the way as we came along about Salency and the queens of the rose. —She is come to lodge at the Prior's with her little daughter

‘ and pleasing tie of a happy marriage. Even fortune is
‘ anxious to obtain it, and comes with respect to receive it
‘ from the hand of honourable indigence. A possession of
‘ twelve hundred years, and such splendid advantages, is
‘ the fairest title that exists in the world.

‘ An important period for the festival of the rose was
‘ when Louis the Thirteenth sent the Marquis de Gordes
‘ the captain of his guards, from the Castle of Varennes
‘ to Salency with a blue ribbon and a silver ring to be
‘ presented from him to the queen of the rose. It is from
‘ that honourable epocha that a blue ribbon flowing in
‘ streamers, surrounds the crown of roses ; that a ring is
‘ fastened to it, and the young girls of her train wear over
‘ their white robes a blue ribbon, in the manner of a
‘ scarf.

‘ In 1766, Mr. Morfontaine settled a yearly income of
‘ one hundred and twenty livres upon the girl then elected
‘ queen : this income to be enjoyed by her during life ; and
‘ after her death, each succeeding girl, who should be
‘ crowned queen, to have one year's income on the day of
‘ her election. This noble generosity can only be rewarded
‘ by the homage of the public ; and honour alone is the
‘ worthy recompence.

‘ Some days before the feast of St. Medard, the inhabi-
‘ tants assemble in presence of the officers of justice, where
‘ this worthy company deliberate upon the important busi-
‘ ness of making a choice ; in doing which they have no
‘ object in view but equity. They know all the merits that
‘ give a title to the crown ; they are acquainted with all
‘ the domestic details of their peaceful village ; they have
‘ not, nor cannot have, any other intention but to be
‘ just : enthusiasm and respect for the memory of the holy
‘ institutor,

daughter Miss Mary, a bold little girl; ah, marry, if you was but to see her! she is but seven years old—she has a great spirit, though she is not very big.—But tell me, Helen, you are one of the candidates, are not you?

Helen.

‘ *institutor, and the excellence of the institution, are still in full force among them. They name three girls, three virtuous Salencians, of the most esteemed and respectable families.*——

‘ *The nomination is immediately carried to the Lord of Salency, or to the person appointed to represent him, who is free to decide between the three girls, but obliged to choose one of them, whom he proclaims queen of the year.*

‘ *Eight days before the ceremony, the name of the successful candidate is declared in church.*——

‘ *When the great day of the festival arrives, which is always the eighth of June, the Lord of Salency may claim the honour of conducting the queen to be crowned. On that grand day, she is greater than all by whom she is surrounded; and that greatness is of a nature which has nothing in common with the usual distinction of rank.*

‘ *The Lord of Salency has the privilege of going to take virtue from her cottage, and lead her in triumph. Leaning upon his arm, or the arm of the person whom he has substituted in his place, the queen steps forth from her simple dwelling, escorted by twelve young girls, dressed in white, with blue scarfs; and twelve youths, who wear the livery of the queen: she is preceded by music and drums, which announce the beginning of the procession: she passes along the streets of the village, between rows of spectators, whom the festival has drawn to Salency, from the distance of four leagues. The public admire and applaud her; the mothers shed tears of joy; the old men renew their strength to follow their beloved queen, and compare her with those whom they have seen in their youth. The Salencians are proud of the merits*

‘ *of*

Helen. Yes; I have been named these eight days, with Ursula and Theresa.

Margery. O, I'll lay a wager you will get the crown,
Helen.

‘ of her to whom they give the crown; she is one of themselves, she belongs to them, she reigns by their choice, she reigns alone, and is the only object of attention.

‘ The queen being arrived at the church, the place appointed for her is always in the midst of the people, the only situation that could do her honour; where she is, there is no longer distinction of rank, it all vanishes in the presence of virtue. A pew, placed in the middle of the choir, in sight of all the people, is prepared to receive her: her train range themselves in two lines by her side; she is the only object of the day, all eyes remain fixed upon her, and her triumph continues.

‘ After vespers the procession begins again; the clergy lead the way, the Lord of Salency receives her hand, her train join, the people follow, and line the streets, while some of the inhabitants, under arms, support the two rows, offering their homage by the loudest acclamations, until she arrives at the chapel of St. Medard, where the gates are kept open: the good Salencians do not forsake their queen at the instant when the reward of virtue is going to be delivered; it is at that moment in particular, that it is pleasing to see her, and honourable for her to be seen.

‘ The officiating clergyman blesses the hat decorated with roses, and its other ornaments; then turning towards the assembly, he pronounces a discourse on the subject of the festival. What an affecting gravity, what an awful impression, does the language of the priest (who in such a moment celebrates the praises of wisdom,) make upon the minds of his hearers! He holds the crown in his hand, while virtue waits kneeling at his feet! all the spectators are affected, tears in every eye, persuasion in every heart; then is the moment of lasting impressions;
‘ and

Helen. Why so? Ursula and Theresa are such good girls—O, I assure you, I shall not be vexed if either the one or the other gets the rose.—Theresa especially, I love her so dearly! You know, Margery, that we have always been like two sisters.—

Margery.

‘ and at that instant he places the crown upon her head.

‘ After this begins a Te Deum, during which the procession is resumed.

‘ The queen, with the crown upon her head, and attended in the same manner as she was when going to receive it, returns the way she came; her triumph still increasing as she passes along, till she again enters the church, and occupies the same place in the middle of the choir, till the end of the service.

‘ She has new homage to receive; and, going forth, is attended to a particular piece of ground; where crowned innocence finds expecting vassals, prepared to offer her presents. They are simple gifts, but their singularity proves the antiquity of the custom; a nosegay of flowers, a dart, two balls, &c. &c.

‘ From thence she is conducted with the same pomp, and led back to her relations, and, in her own house, if she thinks proper, gives a rural collation to her conductor and her retinue.

‘ This festival is of a singular kind, of which there is no model elsewhere. It is intended to encourage wisdom, by bestowing public honours, and for such a purpose they ought to be boundless. Where virtue reigns, there is no rival; and whoever wishes for distinction in her presence, cannot be sufficiently sensible of what is due to triumph.

‘ The distinguishing characteristic of this festival is, that every part of it is referable to the queen, that every thing is eclipsed by her presence; her splendor is direct, not reflected; her glory borrows nothing from distinction of rank; she has no need of any one to make her great and
“ respectable ;

Margery. Therefa is a very pretty girl, very gentle, obliging, and well brought up : but for all that, you are better than she ; there is but one opinion on that head — And then your mother, she has had the rose in her time, and your grandmother Monica has likewise been crowned ; all that tells, and, marry, it is but right it should.—To be sure, there is not a more deserving family than your's to be found in all Salency.—Your deceased father was a most worthy man !—By the bye, I'll engage your brother Basil is not a little pleased that Therefa is a candidate ; though she should not get the rose, it is always a great honour to be named one of the three : it is as much as to say, she will have it in a couple of years from this time. Basil loves Therefa, but your mother won't hear reason on that head ; she has said to me more than a hundred times, *None but a queen of the rose shall have my boy* ; she sticks to her purpose.—Ah, you have a head of your own, neighbour Gertrude.—She is a notable woman.—But tell me, Helen, is your mother gone out ?

Helen.

' respectable ; in one word, it is the image of virtue which shines, and every thing disappears before her.

*' The Pastor * is as respectable as his flock is pure. By showing himself the protector of a festival which preserves the morals of the people from the general contagion, he performs the only character that is suitable to him. It is pleasing to have men to govern who are upright, simple, and industrious ; happy in their mediocrity, peaceable in their mutual dealings, of whom there is no example of a single person having been carried before a magistrate ; men whose purity has never been stained by a crime, never tarnished by a mean action, never debased by a single condemnation ; men whose humble dwellings offer to view, in the bosom of active indigence, the virtues of both the sexes united for the common happiness.'*

** Mr. Sauvel, the Prior of Salency, by his morals, his virtue, and his truly paternal love of his parishioners, is highly deserving of this encomium.*

Helen. Yes, she is gone to the Prior.

Margery. Why truly, the Prior and the Bailiff being the judges of the candidates for the rose, they must hear what every one has to say.—Bless me, I think I hear Gertrude at this moment; how she is prating, I warrant you, of all the fine things she has to say on your account—Helen did this, and Helen did that—O, I see her from hence—She won't forget to tell all the particulars of your behaviour to your grand-mother Monica, with what care you have watched and attended her.

Helen. No, no, my mother won't speak of any such thing; what is there in that to boast of?—Is it possible any one could do otherwise? When one has a grand-mother, is it not natural to love her, and be careful of her, and perhaps—

Margery. Ah, no doubt; but, however, there is not a girl in Salency more respectful to her grand-mother than you have been to Monica.—For you have never been seen a holiday-making, nor dancing in the Great Square on Sundays, and all to stay at home with Monica; and yet you love dancing very well, and are only seventeen. Mary, at your age it is very edifying—it must give pleasure to every body—it well deserves the rose—And I too will go presently to the Prior, and give in my deposition as well as the rest; I will tell him all I have in my heart—and all the fine things I know of you.

Helen. Dear neighbour, I pray you speak to him of Theresa.

Margery. God forgive me, one would almost think you would be sorry to have the crown.

Helen. Ah, Margery, surely I wish for it more than any one; and you can't conceive how my heart beats, when I think that perhaps I shall have it this very day.—I have not shut my eyes these eight days—I say to myself, O what joy will be in our house, if I get the crown!—what satisfaction for my mother!—and my poor grand-mother, what will she say!—it will make her twenty years younger!—O dear, how happy shall I be!

be!—And my brother, and my god-mother, and my cousin Felix! how they will all rejoice!—and you may depend upon it, Margery, so will Theresa; for, though she is a candidate, she will see me crowned with pleasure—Nor will Ursula envy me; so that you see with what reason I should wish for the rose, since my happiness will give pain to nobody, and will be such satisfaction to all my family.

Margery. Without reckoning on a husband within the year—Eh, you need not blush; you very well know, that when a girl is crowned, it is as much as to say, that who shall have her? and all the young men in the village strive who shall get her: the best portion in this place is the crown of roses; and, by my faith, it is but natural that she who is the most prudent should be most beloved. The men would be very great fools if they did not think so. But I believe I hear my neighbour coming.

Helen. Yes, it is my mother.—

SCENE II.

Gertrude, Margery, Helen.

Margery, (to Gertrude.)

GOOD day, neighbour—

Gertrude. Ha, gossip Margery, what a day is this!—It is twenty years this very day since I was crowned; I remember it as if it was but yesterday; how I trembled, and how anxious I was! till the very moment of the declaration I was as stupid as a block.—But all that is nothing to the anguish of a poor mother who wishes the crown for her daughter!—It seems to me that I shall receive a thousand times more honour by the crowning of this dear child, than I had by my own. Ah, if you knew how many pints of bad blood I have made within this fortnight, but more especially since yesterday!—Ah, Margery, none but a mother can conceive this—

Margery.

Margery. However, about six weeks ago you told me you was as good as certain that Helen would have the rose.

Gertrude. I was wrong to say so; there are so many girls in Salency as good as Helen!—God Almighty punish the proud, Margery; that is a terrible thought. —In short, the nearer the time approaches, the more I am fearful.

Margery. Did you find the Prior?

Gertrude. No, he was not at home—but I shall go again.

Margery. This is a busy day with him.

Gertrude. That it is, I promise you.

Margery. Marry, he is a judge, and that makes him anxious.

Gertrude. Then he is so conscientious.—And besides, he loves us all as if we were his own children.

Margery. They would give all the gold in Peru that he would never leave Salency.

Gertrude. O, that is very certain.—The dear worthy man—May heaven preserve him to us!—But, Helen, tell me where is my mother?

Helen. She is in bed, and asleep—She did not close her eyes all last night.

Gertrude. She is in such anxiety about the coronation.—Ah, I wish to heaven she may not fall sick!—*(Turning round.)* Who is that jabbering at the door?—Go and see, Helen.

Helen, (opens the door.) It is Theresa, mother.



SCENE

SCENE III.

Theresa, Gertrude, Margery, Helen.

Theresa.

MRS. Gertrude, I come to let you know that the Bailiff is at home, if you choose to go there.—My mother and Ursula are gone there already.

Gertrude Thank you, my dear, I am just going.

Theresa. The Square is already filled with strangers, and gentlemen, and fine ladies.

Margery. I must go and see all this—

Gertrude. Come, gossip Margery, give me your arm, you shall conduct me to the Bailiff, for I am so agitated I can scarcely walk; I feel as if every thing was turning round with me.

Margery, (giving her her arm.) Come, come along neighbour, I will support you.

[*They go out.*]

SCENE IV.

Helen, Theresa.

Theresa.

SO, we are at last alone; I am glad of it, Helen, for I am very impatient to have some conversation with you about our adventure of last night—I have been thinking of it again and again ever since.—Oh, how have I repented the leaving you to shift for yourself!—If it is known, my dear Helen, I shall be a ruined girl.—

Helen. Come, come, make yourself easy; I have promised to keep your secret, and you may depend upon it I shall not fail.

Theresa. Do you see, Helen, it is not that I want the rose; all the village expect that you are to have it, and there is not one who has a word to say to the contrary.—I likewise very well know that Ursula should be preferred to me; but, however, I have been named a candidate, and, to be sure, that is a great happiness.
—Helen,

—Helen, I will tell you all—Basil!—In short, my mother will be very proud if I should be married to Basil—Basil, the son, the grandson, and the brother of queens of the rose, for it is certain that you are going to be one: but if this unlucky affair is known, all will be over with me; I shall be struck off the list of candidates, and excluded for ever from the rose?—it would kill my mother, and me too, Helen—To think of it only, makes my blood run cold!

Helen. Excluded from the rose!—Do not say so, Theresa, it is dreadful to hear it mentioned.—And, after all, what is your crime?—You was fearful, you was tired, there was a long way to go, and you durst not venture to return through the wood when it was dark as pitch—that is all—

Theresa. And the worthy action I left you to do alone!—But you had the courage to take the poor old women all the way home to Chauni!—I am very sorry however, Helen, that this is not known for your sake; but, thank God, it is not necessary for your gaining the rose.—O dear, when I think that you was obliged to come back through the wood after it was dark night—

Helen. I was very much afraid when I was there; and all gossip Margery's stories of spirits came into my mind!—I had not a drop of blood in my veins.

Theresa. And then there is old goody Magdalen, who died last Saturday, that used to go there to gather leaves.

Helen. She came in my head more than twenty times.—

Theresa. However, you did not hear any thing?

Helen. To be sure, every now and then I heard a noise of leaves—*Fri, frou, fri, frou*, all about my ears—just like one gathering leaves.

Theresa. Lack-a-day!—it was the soul of poor Magdalen.—However, you was very happy that you did not see her—Nancy and her mother were talking of her the night before last—

Helen. Yes, I remember it very well—They saw her in the shape of a great white sheep.

Theresa.

Theresa. Yes, a sheep as large as a calf, as Nancy told me—For my part, I should have died with fear.—But tell me, at what o'clock did you get home? What did your mother say?

Helen. Ah, Theresa, that you might not suffer, I told a lie for the first time in my life—That is what it cost me. I got home by nine o'clock; my mother was quite benumbed with fear: *And why so late, Helen, says she? And why have you come home without leaves? And where is Theresa?* All those questions confounded me; but I answered her as we had agreed: *Mother, said I, I left Theresa hard by; my ass fell into the ditch, and we were I don't know how long before we could get him out; and likewise some other reasons.* I was very glad to find my mother believed this; yet, after all, I was uneasy to see her give into it.—It went so to my heart, Theresa, that I could not help crying.—And pray, how did you manage?

Theresa. I returned by the little path at the back of the village, which is so full of nettles that nobody passes that way, and got home to our house by leaping over the garden-hedge, that no one might see me; then I hid myself in our barn till it was night, where I was as much afraid as if I had been in the wood; there I thought of you, I repented having left you, and O how I sobbed and cried!—I said to myself if I had had more courage I would have been with Helen, and we should both have returned to the village, holding up our heads, and proud of what had happened!—And, instead of that, Helen must conceal her worthy action, that she may conceal my fault.—And I cried, God knows how bitterly I cried!—At last, when it was night, I went out again through the garden; and returning home along the village, told my mother the same story you told your's.

Helen. Nobody saw us come back separately, and the good woman of Chauni does not know our names: so that our adventure can never be discovered; and I swear

to

to you again, my dear Theresa, that as long as I live I will never open my lips about it, let what will happen.

Theresa, (embracing her.) O, Helen, how I love you!—

Helen. Come, come, you do not love one that is ungrateful.—But I think I hear a knock at the door.—
(*She cries*) Coming, coming.—

Theresa. God forgive me, it is certainly the Prior's voice!—Yes, indeed, it is he—and the lady from Noyon, the grocer's wife that brought Margery along with her.

SCENE V.

Prior, Mrs. Dummer, Mary, Helen, Theresa.

Helen.

DEAR me, how unlucky that my mother is gone out!

Prior. Good-day, Helen; this is Mrs. Dummer, who is come from Noyon to see the festival.

Mrs. Dummer. And to get acquainted with the candidates.

Prior. These are two of them.

Mrs. Dummer. I must embrace them; what charming girls!—

[*Helen and Theresa curtsy.*]

Helen. I pray you, Theresa, go and see if you can find my mother.—

Theresa. I run.

[*She goes out.*]

Mary, (pointing to Helen.) Mama, is not this she that is to be queen of the rose?

Helen. O Mifs, sure I am not the most deserving.

Mary. O mama, beg Mr. Prior to give her the rose—

Mrs. Dummer. Yes, yes, to be sure that will do the business.

Mary. Marry, however, she is the prettiest, and by much the fairest; the rest are all black as any thing.

Mrs. Dummer. But harkee, Mary, you do not love little Dido, our neighbour's daughter.

Mary. No indeed, she always scratches me, I don't love her at all.

Mrs.

Mrs. Dummer. However, she is very pretty, and very fair.—

Mary. But she is as wicked as I don't know what.—

Mrs. Dummer. It is then much better to be good than to be pretty.

Mary. But can't one be pretty without scratching?

Mrs. Dummer. Yes, sure. But beauty goes off, and goodness lasts: besides, it is by being good that a little girl makes her papa and mama pleased with her; it is goodness that makes her loved; you plainly see then, it is by that alone she can deserve to be rewarded.

Mary. O yes, that is but right, I shall remember it. So then, mama, she that is the best girl is to be the queen.

Mrs. Dummer. Certainly. But, Mr. Prior, you promised me, that in this house you would shew me the greatest curiosity in Salency.

Prior. That is true. Well, see here, look at this press—it contains some very valuable riches.—

Mrs. Dummer. What is it?

Mary. O, I wish they would open it.

Prior. Helen, can we have the key?

Helen. I will go and see if my grand-mother will give it me.

Mary. Mama, will you give me leave to go with her?

Mrs. Dummer. Yes, yes, go along.

[*Helen takes Mary by the hand and goes out.*]

Prior. This family, Mrs. Dummer, is in fact one of the most considerable in Salency; if you knew the piety and charity of these people!—and how they are respected by all the village!—for here, it is virtue only that impresses with respect.

Mrs. Dummer. You are very happy, Mr. Prior, to have the care of such good souls.

Prior. I express my thanks to heaven for it every day of my life. Only think, Mrs. Dummer, that during the twenty years I have lived here, I have not seen one bad action committed; I have not known one dishonest man!—To give you an idea of the purity of their manners and

and morals, I must acquaint you with the reason for their having refused the rose last year to a young girl. She was perfectly prudent and modest, indeed there is no instance of one being otherwise here; but some witnesses deposed, and indeed it was proved, that she had passed almost a whole working day in idleness, and her brother had ridiculed an old man; and she was unanimously excluded.

Mrs. Dummer. So the faults of relations are likewise taken into the account?

Prior. Yes, truly; which is the cause of the rose keeping the boys, as well as the girls, in awe: you will evidently see, that the fathers and brothers must be attentive to their own conduct.—For instance, that very young man I just now mentioned to you, who contributed to the exclusion of his sister, was just on the eve of being married, and upon this the relations of the girl broke off the match.

Mrs. Dummer. O, I understand you; so the queen of the rose procures honour to the whole family—

Prior. Certainly; every individual is flattered with the thought of having contributed something to the gaining of the crown.

Mrs. Dummer. But there is one circumstance which perplexes me; are they Salencians who depose against the candidates?

Prior. Yes.—

Mrs. Dummer. Does not that occasion resentment and hatred among them?

Prior. By no means. Without the most positive proofs no deposition would be received; it is neither envy nor aversion that depose, but a noble desire that the rose may not fall to the share of a person whose merit is doubtful.—The desire of honours and riches frequently occasion odious crimes and cabals; but this rose, this simple, rural prize, offered to virtue, can only inspire a laudable emulation, and serve still more to purify those innocent hearts that burn with zeal to obtain it. But I
hear

hear Helen coming.—Ha, the worthy Monica, her old grand-mother, is with her.

SCENE VI.

Prior, Mrs. Dummer, Mary, Monica, Helen, Theresa.

Monica supported by Helen, who has hold of Mary by the hand on the other side.

Prior. Good day, mother Monica ; how do you do ?

Monica. Thank you, Mr. Prior, e'en but so so.—Marry, by next Louis's day, I shall be fourscore, and that is an age to make one feel ; my limbs fail me, and I can scarce walk.

Mrs. Dummer. Set a chair for her.

Monica. Thank you, madam, I will e'en sit down then with your good leave. (*Helen places a chair near the press. Monica sits down.*)

Prior. Mother Monica, we sent Helen to beg the key of your press.

Monica. Why, truly, I don't give the key of our treasure so readily to such young folks ; it will be time enough when she is a queen of the rose, if it please God that I live to see that day ; but I have brought you the key ; here it is, Mr. Prior.

Prior.* Now, Mrs. Dummer, you shall see the fairest family-titles that exist in the world ; look here.

Mrs. Dummer, (looking into the press.) Ha ! what is that under all these little niches of glass ?

Prior. Dried crowns of roses.

Monica. O yes, they are dry, for some of them have been there much more than a hundred years !

Mary. O, Mama, it is pretty—they are just like a shrine for relics.

Prior. Well, Mrs. Dummer, you don't say any thing.

Mrs.

* These particulars are not invented ; they are perfectly true, as well as all that is said in this piece relating to the manners and customs of the Salencians.

Mr. Dummer. I am quite confounded !—How is this ! Have there been as many queens of the rose in this family, as I see crowns here.

Monica. Ah, madam, there are many more ; I had another daughter, who is dead, who had a number of daughters ; all the crowns of that side of that house are wanting ; and then, my father married again, and his children, as was but right, have inherited some of the crowns ; we have only those of the direct line.

Mrs. Dummer, (still looking to the press.) They all have labels.

Prior. Yes, the names of the queens are written upon these labels.

Monica. Mr. Prior, you, who know all this as well as your Pater-noster, show madam the crown of Mary-Jean Bocard ; it is the oldest, I believe.

Prior. Is it not at the top of the press ?

Monica. Yes, can you reach it !

Prior. Yes, yes, I have it. Let us see the date. *(He reads,)* Fifteen hundred and twenty.

Mrs. Dummer, (holding the crown which is under a glass.) One thousand five hundred and twenty !—

Monica. That is a valuable piece, is it not ?

Mary. (looking at the Crown.) What ! is that a rose ? How it is changed !

Monica. Helen, show that of Catharine Javelle ; it stands below—

Helen. Yes, grand-mother—

Monica. Catharine Javelle was my mother's sister, and died very young : her story is comical.

Prior. Tell it us, mother Monica.

Monica. You must know then, she was washing linen at the great pond ; she had nobody with her but a little boy of seven years old, to carry the linen ; when, all of a sudden, little Johnny—(his name was Johnny, he was the son of poor Michael).

Prior. He is still living ; that Johnny is now good-man Ruffel ?

Mrs.

Mrs. Dummer. Upon my life, I could see all the parchments in the world with a dry eye, though I have some; but in looking at these dried roses, I find the tears start!—Ah, how sorry am I that Mary is not five or six years older!—She would have been sensible of this.

Mary. Mamma, you must bring me back when I grow bigger.

Prior. She is right; it is very good for a young girl to breathe the air of Salency.—Farewel, mother Monica.

Monica. But, Mr. Prior, Gertrude will be very sorry—

Prior. I shall return.

Monica. Mr. Prior, the declaration, however, is to be at five o'clock?

Prior. Yes, mother Monica—(*He takes her by the hand.*) My worthy woman, be perfectly easy—I beg of you—

Monica. O good Lord:—

Prior. Farewel—till by and by.

Mrs. Dummer. Farewel, my dear Mrs. Monica.

Monica. Your servant, madam.

[*Mrs. Dummer and the Prior go out.*]

Helen goes to open the door for them, and makes several curtsies, which Mrs. Dummer returns after having embraced her. In the mean time, Monica remains alone at the front of the Stage.

Monica. Mr. Prior bid me be perfectly easy; that is a good sign;—May God Almighty grant it!—(*To Helen who returns.*) Helen, did you hear what Mr. Prior said?—

Helen. O yes, grandmother; I am still all in confusion.—He took hold of your hand.—

Monica. And he squeezed it, my child—I dared not to speak to him of you, because of the lady being present.

Helen. O grandmother—I have very agreeable forebodings!

O

Monica.

Monica. And so have I!—O I shall see you this very day, in five hours, with the crown of roses!—After that I shall die content.—But, hark'ee, child; don't go to be vain of this; don't therefore fancy yourself better than Therefa or Urfula; that would spoil all.

Helen. Why should I be vain? If I am crowned, I shall owe it to you and my mother; I am only vain of being both your daughter and her's—

Monica. Poor little dear!—Come and kiss me—God will bless you, you deserve it.—But what is the matter?—you seem to be in tears?

Helen. It is very true—I am thinking now, that if you should flatter yourself with the hope of my getting the crown, and unhappily I do not gain it—you will be so uneasy, so sorely vexed—

Monica. Do not sob so for that.—Well, my child, if you do not get it, we must submit; that is no reason for murmuring against Providence. But the Prior bid me be perfectly easy; I promise you he did not say that for nothing—Come, my girl, and shut the press, for you must go and get dinner ready.—Is not your brother come back yet?

Helen. No, grandmother, he is always at the other end of the village with poor Robert, who is very sick, and knows no comfort but when Basil is with him; and my brother, who loves Robert as he does his eyes, wishes to remain with him till the time of the ceremony.

Monica. That is very right, very right indeed. Give me my key—I hope I shall open that press this night yet, to lock up your crown in it.

Helen. O dear grandmother!

Monica. Give me your arm, my girl. Come, let us go. [They go out.]

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

Prior, Gertrude.

Prior.

YES, my dear Gertrude, I must speak with you in private.

Gertrude. Bless me, Mr. Prior, you seem I don't know! How it alarms me—

Prior. I am uneasy, I own to you—

Gertrude. You are going to acquaint me of some misfortune—

Prior. You know the singular affection I have always had for your family; I am going to tell you something which will give you great uneasiness, my dear good woman, and that distresses me exceedingly.

Gertrude. Ah, Heavens—it is something that relates to Helen!

Prior. It is so.

Gertrude. Is it possible?—There are depositions against her?

Prior. That is true, and—the offence is not trifling?—

Gertrude. Ah, Mr. Prior, they are lies—

Prior. Do not weep, my dear Gertrude; perhaps Helen will justify herself: She must have a hearing.

Gertrude. But pray, Sir, what is said of her?

Prior. She was seen coming home last night when it was late, and alone.

Gertrude. It is false; Theresa was with her—

Prior. No, Theresa came back by stealth about five o'clock; she concealed herself, but she was seen.

Gertrude. Well, Mr. Prior, it is false—it is false—Helen—where is she?—(*She cries with all her might.*)

Helen, Helen—O here she comes.

Helen, (running.) Mother—

Gertrude, (to the Prior.) Well, now I have not spoke to her in secret—I am for no connivings—ask her, Mr. Prior.

Helen, (aside.) Ah, what does my mother mean?

Gertrude. Helen tell a lie!—Helen!—That is too gross an accusation to make me afraid—since that is what is said, I have no fear.

Prior, (to Helen.) Come hither child, and answer without evasion.

Gertrude. She has no cunning, I promise you; you may depend upon it, she never boggled at telling the truth once in all her life.

Helen, (aside.) I tremble——

Prior. Helen, you have hitherto been a pattern to all the girls in the village, and I still believe you have the same virtues; I am persuaded that your accusers have been deceived by some false appearances; but in short, several witnesses have just now come separately to depose the same thing against you—

Gertrude. You keep her upon the rack; where is the need of all this dilly-dally?—Helen, they say that you came home from the wood late last night by yourself, and that Theresa hid herself.—Good God, she turns pale!—It is only surprise, Mr. Prior; I know it—I am sure of her!

Prior. But answer me, Helen—is the imputation false?—You have a very easy means to justify yourself. I shall tell you the names of the witnesses if you choose it, and you shall be confronted with them.

Gertrude. Well, Helen?—

Helen, (aside.) Ah, what martyrdom!——

Prior. If the fact is true, and you deny it, think that you treat those people as slanderers, who have told nothing but the truth!—Why these tears, why this despair, if you are innocent.

Helen. Yes, I am innocent——

Gertrude. Well, speak then, tell your reasons.—I begin, God forgive me, to tremble as if my blood was freezing in my veins.—Explain yourself, Helen.

Helen.

Helen. I cannot—(*Aside.*) O Theresa!—

Gertrude. How is this?—you cannot?—That won't do!—She is so simple—Only answer me—Did you tell me a lie last night?—(*In a severe tone.*) Helen!—can it be true?—No, she is quite frightened, she is at her wit's end—Helen, my girl, answer me; you drive me to distraction!

Helen. O mother—I am innocent.

Gertrude. You have not told a lie, then!—The witnesses are slanderers, are not they?

Helen. O, no, no—

Gertrude. How, wretch!

Helen. My dear mother, if you knew!—

Gertrude. (*in a passion.*) You my daughter!—I renounce you—O Lord, why did I not die before I saw this—(*She bursts into tears, and sinks down on a chair.*)

Helen. (*throwing herself at her feet.*) Well, mother, only hear me!—

Gertrude. (*pushing her away.*) Let me be quiet.

Prior. (*taking Gertrude by the hand.*) Poor dear woman!

Gertrude. Ah, Mr. Prior, have pity on us, save the honour of a worthy family: I have a boy; must his reputation suffer? I shall die!—

Prior. From the respect I have for your family, I shall suppress this adventure; the people shall not know it: I promise you that Theresa shall not be interrogated; she alone can discover all.—

Helen. (*sobbing.*) Nothing will be discovered to my dishonour, however!—

Gertrude. Hold your tongue, you unworthy—

Prior. Can you indeed, Helen, have the assurance to maintain that you are innocent, when you own that you have lied, that you returned alone, and sent home Theresa?

Helen. Ah, Mr. Prior, I did not send her home; she returned of her own accord; I may at least say so much.

Gertrude. Impudence!—So the whole plot was your contrivance!—You returned after Theresa, and by night!

—You have told a hundred lies!—and I must hear them with my own ears!—O my poor mother, what a dreadful fall for her!

Prior. The hour of declaration is at hand——

Gertrude. The declaration!——and I was in hopes that this wretch—Ah, there is no more joy for me!—

Helen. This is too much, too much indeed; I must speak.

Gertrude. Do not presume to come near me——

Helen. Mother, dear mother, hear me!——

Gertrude. Insolent—(*She pushes her rudely from her; Helen falls at a little distance upon her knees, and raising her hands to heaven, cries:*) O my God!

Gertrude, (*in tears, runs and raises her up.*) She is hurt!—This only was wanting——

Helen. No, dear mother—but hear me——

Prior. Let us lose no more time, Gertrude; let us go to the Bailiff's to persuade him not to divulge this unhappy affair; the witnesses themselves, from the respect they have for you, will willingly contribute to the same purpose——

Gertrude. Save my family; I pray you, have compassion upon us, Mr. Prior.

Prior. May this teach you to reflect, Helen; I can perceive faults in your conduct, such as I have never yet seen the like in Salency; were it not for the sake of your respectable family, you would not get off with only the loss of the crown——and assure yourself, that the worthy examples you have always had before your eyes make you still more guilty. Come, let us be gone, my dear Gertrude. ——

Helen. One moment——dear mother.——

Gertrude. Such assurance! if you dare to move a step, dread a mother's curse.

Helen, (*sinking down on a chair.*) O, I am worn out!——

Gertrude. Let us go, Mr. Prior: Oh, oh, what a day of affliction!

[*She goes out with the Prior.*]

SCENE

S C E N E II.

Helen, (*alone, raising herself up.*)

MOTHER!—(*She sinks down again.*) My heart sinks within me!—She is gone!—Perhaps I should have told all! and Theresa would have been ruined—and my brother would have been distracted—They love each other, they will be married: they, at least, will be happy!—But what will become of me?—I have nothing to reproach myself with; that thought will support me!—My greatest grief is the vexation of my mother!—Twenty times I had a mind to confess the truth to her;—but I promised Theresa to keep the secret!—Yet to see my mother so dreadfully enraged against me, pierced me to the heart—the thought of it makes me even shudder?—O how dreadful is the anger of a mother! And what must it be when one deserves it?—My mother—from whom, till now, I never have had but expressions of the greatest tenderness; O, how she has treated me!—My God, how I trembled from head to foot when she said to me, *I renounce you*:—Oh, I shall never lose the sound of it out of my ears—it penetrated to the bottom of my soul—At this instant, I was going to declare the whole affair; but, happily for poor Theresa, my mother would not hear me.—But, after all, I was wrong; for I might have concealed Theresa's fault, and told the story of the poor woman—No, it would still have been known that I came home alone; and then an inquiry would have been made of the woman at Chauni, who would have told that Theresa deserted her.—There was no way to evade that.—However, the Almighty sees my innocence, and that ought to comfort me?—But, after all, I never shall have the rose; and my mother, and my poor grandmother, who believe that I shall be crowned!—Alas!—how unfortunate I am!—No, no, I will not betray Theresa, I promised it—but when the marriage is over, I will tell all to my mother; I cannot live without that!—O Basil! O Theresa! what I suffer

for your sakes——O heaven, somebody comes ; let me hide my tears.

SCENE III.

Helen, Margery.

Margery.

HELEN!——but you are in tears, my girl——What has happened ?

Helen. Nothing at all, Margery.

Margery. But——you are pale as a sheet.

Helen. I must go to my grandmother——Adieu, Margery——(*Aside in going out.*) I must conceal myself till after the coronation. [*She goes out.*]

Margery, (alone.) I am quite confounded ! What does all this mean ? Gossip Gertrude too was all trembling, and like one distracted !——and Basil.——Oh, there must be something in all this !——Ha ! here comes Theresa.

SCENE IV.

Margery, Theresa.

Margery.

TELL me, Theresa, did you see Gertrude ?

Theresa. No ; why do you ask ?——

Margery. Because I just now met her going to the Bailiff's ; I wanted to speak to her, but she could neither see nor hear——when, all on a sudden, her son Basil, coming from Robert's, to witness the ceremony, came near her.—*Go your way*, says she to him, *go your ways, my poor boy, go back to Robert*——and then she whispered something, I don't know what, in his ear. Basil turned red, then pale, and burst into tears ; he put his hands on his face, in this manner, and sat down on a stone. Mr. Prior, who was with Gertrude, likewise said something to him softly.—And then the Prior and Gertrude went on to the Bailiff's.

Theresa. Is it possible ?——And what became of Basil ?——

Margery.

Margery. Oh, he remained there a good while thinking, with his eyes fixed on the ground.—I was close by, and moving towards him; as, soon as he saw me, he shuddered, and taking to his heels fled back with all speed towards the house of his friend Robert.

Theresa. O heaven!—Where is Helen?

Margery. She is crying; and when I came, she immediately made off.

Theresa. How!—

Margery. Theresa, my heart grieves for it: but I see plainly Helen has committed some fault, which is to deprive her of the crown.

Theresa. She! Helen!—can you believe it?

Margery. She was the pearl of the village.—I very well know that—However, I'll engage there are some depositions against her—

Theresa. Depositions—Ah, let me fly. (*She goes out, running, with all her might.*)

Margery, (alone.) So, there is another!—I believe they have all lost their senses; some madness has seized them.—(*A voice is heard behind the stage: Helen, Helen!*)

Margery. I hear Monica's voice; yes, it is she.—

S C E N E V.

Margery, Monica.

Monica.

HELEN!—Where can she be?

Margery, (Going to give her arm to Monica, who walks with difficulty.) I don't know, mother Monica; but sit down, and I will go and call her.

Monica. This is the first time I ever missed her when I wanted her

Margery. But was not she with you just now?

Monica. No; and I wanted to come hither, Margery, because the door is towards the Square, and now is the time of the declaration.—If my Helen is chosen

Queen, I shall hear the music a little the sooner—O Margery how my heart beats!—

Margery, (aside.) Poor old woman, she knows nothing of the matter; she must not be told, it would certainly kill her.

Monica, (calling.) Helen, Helen.—

Margery, (likewise calling, and moving towards the bottom of the stage.) Helen, Helen, your grandmother calls you—I hear her foot—she is running.

SCENE VI.

Monica, Margery, Helen.

Monica.

COME then, my girl—

Margery, (aside.) How melancholy she looks!—

Helen. Grand-mother——

Monica. Well, my child, five o'clock is struck!—You are thoughtful; for my part, thank heaven, I have no apprehensions——But who is this coming?

Margery. It is Gertrude.

SCENE VII.

Monica, Gertrude, Margery, Helen.

Helen, (aside.)

MY blood runs cold——

Monica. Come, Gertrude; do you hear any news?—

Gertrude, (aside.) My mother, O heavens!——and Margery!—I must be silent.—*(Aloud.)* Mother, what are you doing here? you would be better in your chamber

Monica. No, daughter—It was in this spot, this day twenty years, that I saw our Lord of Salency come and take thy hand——It was here I saw thee crowned, Gertrude—Don't you remember how you hung about my neck—how we cried?——May the good God send me such another day of joy, and then dispose of me as it is his good will!—I shall leave this world without a wish—

Gertrude,

Gertrude, (aside.) She wrings my heart.

Helen, (aside.) O what a proof!—

Monica. Come hither, Helen; give me your hand: it was in this manner I had hold of your mother, when all the company came to this house—My girl, you are as deserving as your mother; you are prudent, a lover of truth, and modest as she—is not she, Gertrude?

Gertrude, (aside.) O my God, my God—

Monica. You seem confounded, my children; you don't speak; that is natural—I, who have had two daughters and a sister queens, am a little more courageous; but, however, my heart beats violently.—(*She looks at Helen while she holds her by the hand.*) How you blush!—She trembles like a leaf—Gertrude, come and encourage the poor little dear; come and kiss her, I pray you—Helen, go to your mother—

Helen, (sobbing, throws herself upon her grandmother's neck.) Dear grandmother, there is nobody but you whom I dare embrace!—

Gertrude. Alas!—

Monica. Why so, my child?—Gertrude, what is the matter with you?—I never saw you so before.

Margery, (aside.) Oh, certainly some dreadful thing has happened!—

Monica. Come, once more, Gertrude, come and embrace our child; run to her, Helen!

Helen, (in a supplicating tone to her mother.) Mother!—(*She moves towards her.—Aside.*) Ah, what a look!—(*She stops.*)

Monica. Well—What is the matter?

Gertrude. Mother—I am sorry to see you so strongly persuaded that she shall be crowned!

Monica. What!—Do you know any bad news?—You are silent—Is the queen declared?—

Gertrude. I do not know.

Monica. Ah, you conceal something from me—And Basil, considering what time it is, why is not he here?—*Margery!*—you are all in tears.

Gertrude.

Gertrude. O heavens ; what noise is that ?—Ah, what shall we hear ?—O mother, if you love me, summon up all your courage and resolution—

Monica, (bursting in tears.) Ah, my child—courage at my age—

Helen. O God, protect me !

S C E N E VIII.

Monica, Gertrude, Margery, Helen, Theresa, out of breath, her hair in disorder, running in great haste.

Theresa.

HELEN !

Gertrude. What means this violent haste ?

Theresa, (seeing Helen, rushes into her arms.) Helen !—you are declared queen.

Helen. How !

Monica. O God !——

Gertrude. Is it possible ?

Margery. What happiness.

Theresa, (embracing Helen several times.) Helen, Helen is crowned !—Mrs. Gertrude, I alone was guilty ; I have declared all ; Helen is queen.

Gertrude. I die —

Helen, (receiving her in her arms.) O mother !—

Monica. Gertrude !

Helen, (still holding her mother.) Oh, my mother !——
Some water, Theresa !——Margery, water !

Monica. The surprise was too much for her.

Theresa. Now she comes to herself !—

Helen. She opens her eyes !

Gertrude. Helen !—Ah, my girl !—

Monica. She has hold of you—She is queen——

Gertrude. Ah, is it true ?

Theresa. You will see the judges here presently to find her ; I left the procession about three hundred paces off ; I made only one spring to get here, but they who are in the train march slow——

Gertrude, (embracing Helen.) Dear Helen !—my poor child

child—thou art innocent!—thou art queen!—O God, neither grief nor joy kills.

Monica. What was it you concealed from me?—

Gertrude. Therefa, what have you declared!—Helen, however, returned home alone last night, and told me a lie?

Therefa. I'll tell you how it was. Yesterday we set out to go and gather leaves in the little wood: when we got there, we found an old woman who had fallen into a ditch; she was much hurt, and was crying: we got her out; and then she told us she belonged to Chauni, but she was not able to go home. I proposed to put her upon our afs, and to bring her home with us. But who will cure her wounds, said Helen? There are surgeons at Chauni, we must carry her thither. Upon which the poor woman sobbed with joy, and said she was very desirous to return to Chauni. Come, come, said Helen; it was no sooner said than done, and then she put her upon the afs.—But, said I, it is more than a league from hence to Chauni, we shan't get back by nine o'clock—we shall be obliged to pass through the wood in the night.—I know that you are timorous, said Helen; go your ways, and I will go alone.—But, Helen, you are timorous too—I am no longer so, said she.—In short, we debated for some time; but at length my heart failed; I left Helen and the woman, after having agreed that Helen should conceal it, and that I should not be seen in the village till night.

Gertrude. O Helen.—I was not worthy of having such a child as thee; I accused you, thrust you from me, and abused you—

Helen. Could you do otherwise, dear mother, when appearances—

Gertrude. Appearances!—I ought not to have believed them.

Monica. I am amazed!—

Margery. You interrupted them —

Helen. But, mother, do you observe what Therefa has done for me? she went and accused herself!

Margery.

Margery. Yes, by my faith, and without boggling ; when I told her that all were in tears, she instantly guessed the cause, and flew like lightning.

Gertrude. The dear girl!—

Monica. Good soul!

Gertrude, (to Theresa.) You have been, then, to find the Prior?

Theresa. Yes ; at the very instant when all were assembling for the declaration, I desired leave to speak in the Great Square before all the people. They would not hear me : but I made such a bustle, that I was at last permitted to tell my story ; which I did from beginning to end, in the presence of the whole assembly ; who, the moment I had done, immediately cried out, *Long live Helen our Queen of the Rose.* Our Lord of Salency, the Prior, and Bailiff, instantly proclaimed her queen ; upon which I came running thither.

Gertrude. Well, this action makes amends for that of yesterday ; which after all, was only childish fear, that time will correct.—Theresa, I know Basil loves you. I will go to-morrow, my girl, and ask your mother's consent.

Theresa. O, Mrs. Gertrude!

Helen, (embracing Theresa.) My dear Theresa!—

Monica, (to Gertrude.) You have prevented me, Gertrude ; I was going to say the same thing—

Gertrude. I was very certain, mother, that you would not oppose it.—But what is this I hear?

Theresa. It is the music—it is the whole procession—

Gertrude, (to Helen.) My dear child—go and ask your grandmother's blessing!

Helen, (runs and throws herself at Monica's feet.) May my mother and grandmother bless me, and heaven preserve them both! (*Monica and Gertrude embrace her.*)

Monica. I cannot speak!—but the Almighty sees into my heart, and knows the good I wish you!

Gertrude. Be still prudent and pious as thou art ; that
is

is all we can ask of him for our dear and deserving child!——

Margery. O happy family!

Theresa. But where is Basil?——

Gertrude. Send somebody to see for him, Margery——

Margery. I will go myself——Ha, here he is, and all the people with him.

[*Rural music is heard at a distance.*]

S C E N E IX.

Prior, Bailiff, Lord of Salency, Monica, Gertrude, Margery, Helen, Basil, Theresa, Mrs Dummer, Mary, some other Ladies, a company of young Girls, Musicians, &c.

Basil, (running before the rest of the people, catches Helen in his arms, who is still on her knees before her mother and grandmother. Monica is sitting.)

HELEN! my dear Sister!

Gertrude and Monica. My son!——(*They embrace one another in tears. The rest of the spectators stop to view the affecting scene.*)

Monica. My dear children, help me to rise.—(*They help her to rise. The Lord of Salency, the Prior and the Bailiff. come forward.*)

Lord of Salency. Dear Mrs. Monica, what a happy day for you and for Salency!—The worthy action of one girl of our village does honour to us all!——(*All the young girls surround Helen with an air of joy and affecting tenderness. The Lord says to the Prior, in pointing to the girls.*) Would a stranger, on witnessing this scene, suspect that Helen is surrounded by none but rivals?—

Prior. Happy the man who can justly estimate the invaluable blessing of being the owner of this fortunate corner of the world!

Monica, (to the Lord.) That nothing may be wanting to complete our satisfaction, we beg that our good Lord will give his consent that Basil may be married to Theresa.

Basil.

Basil. O Heavens!

Lord of Salency. You cannot do better, mother Monica; Theresa is worthy of being your daughter. It is not for having declared the truth that I admire her, for she would have been a monster if she had remained silent; but what I praise her for, is the noble candid manner in which she confessed her fault. She might have intrusted her secret to two or three people only, which would have been sufficient to reinstate Helen in all her claims to the crown of roses; but instead of that, she wanted to make her friend's triumph complete, by declaring her innocence in presence of the whole assembly: it was in the Great Square she told her story, without attempting to excuse herself, thinking only of shewing the merits of Helen, and at a time when she was persuaded that by this action she would for ever forfeit all claims to the crown of roses, and lose her reputation. 'Tis that which merits the esteem and praise of every good Salencian, and the title you now offer her.—But let us no longer delay the affecting ceremony, which gives a crown to virtue. Come, Helen, you must for a moment be separated from your worthy parents; the fairest of my privileges is that of leading you to church: I think it too great an honour to yield it even to your mother. (*He moves forward and offers his hand to Helen, who makes a curtsy and leans upon his arm.*) Gertrude, you will follow us?—Mother Monica, can you come?

Monica. Yes, yes, my lord; my joy has made me younger by a score of years.

Gertrude. My dearest mother! Basil, Theresa, and I, will help you.

Monica. Come then, my dear children, and support your happy old mother——

Lord of Salency. I will, as it is my duty, lead back the Queen of the Rose to her home; and then I hope that she and her family, with all the village, will come to my house and dance till night——

Monica. Ah, most willingly.

Lord

Lord of Salency. Come, then, we will set out—and let us go slow on account of the worthy mother Monica.—(*The Lord leading the Queen of the Rose, goes first; then Monica, supported by Gertrude, Basil, and Theresa. The Prior and the Bailiff go in the same rank. The young girls follow next; then the ladies who are strangers, the musicians, and the spectators, close the procession. As soon as the procession begins to move, the Musicians play a march. Mrs. Dummer and Mary remain the last. All the people go out except Mrs. Dummer and Mary.*

Mary. Well, mamma, why don't you follow, it is so pretty?

Mrs. Dummer. I am quite confounded!—I have come four leagues, and am only a shop-keeper's wife—but indeed, Mary, it is a sight worthy the presence of a queen—yes, truly, a queen would be delighted, and in raptures, at seeing these good, these worthy Salencians—I promise you she would—

Mary. Well, then, mamma, let us go and join them.

Mrs. Dummer. Come, then, let us go. Alas, why was not I born in Salency! [*They go out.*

EG L A N T I N E;

O R,

INDOLENCE REFORMED.

I F R O M

THE TALES OF THE CASTLE.

A FRENCH Financier was married to a Lady named Doralice; she had an immense fortune, but well knew the foolish vanity of making a shew of her magnificence, against which both her heart and understanding revolted. Luxury she considered as blameable in all, but in those, who were not in some degree compelled to it by their station in life, utterly unpardonable. Her house was plain, yet convenient and neat; she laid out no money on jewels; had no public entertainments, but did many generous actions; and thus it was her riches purchased the blessings of the poor, the gratitude of the unhappy, and the esteem of all around her, in place of the contempt of the wise, and the envy of fools. Her dress was plain and neat, and her manners without ostentation.

She enjoyed the company of her friends, yet her time when alone never lay heavy on her hands; and that she might collect such friends and acquaintances as were really agreeable, she gave no exclusive preference to one class more than another; she neither said, 'I will see none but people of such a rank, nor, 'I will not admit people of such a rank;' but determined to receive all persons effectually distinguished by the qualities of the mind and understanding, however mean their rank in life.

A daughter of about six years of age, was her only child, who gave certain indications of a good heart; she
was

was gentle, obedient, and sincere ; she neither wanted memory nor capacity, but was excessively indolent, consequently without activity and application ; her motions were slow, her manners inattentive, and indeed every way remarkable for sloth and negligence.

Her name was Eglantine. She took her lessons with great gentleness, but she paid no attention to one word that was said to her, and therefore made no progress. Her Governante too was continually complaining of her want of care ; the gloves, scissors, handkerchiefs, dolls and trinkets of Eglantine were found in every corner of the house : she would rather lose than put her things in order, or lock them up ; her chamber was always littered, and, as far as it depended on her, always dirty and disgusting. Half the day was wasted in seeking her books, her work, and her play-things ; and she fritted and consumed in that disagreeable occupation, not only the time intended for her instruction, but that also allowed for recreation.

There was no getting her out of bed without a scold, then a new lecture began upon the lethargic stupor and redoubled gapings she regularly continued for more than an hour after she was up, another upon the excessive length of her breakfast ; fresh complaints were heard concerning the morning's walk ; she would rather sit upon the damp grass than run about, and was continually either too hot or too cold. Her lessons were taken much in the same way, she always cried, or was ready to cry, and even her recreations were no amusement to her ; they had always to make a search for her play-things, which gave a new cause of rebuke.

Her mother, though every other way qualified to make an excellent Governess, wanted experience ; she had never before presided over the education of a child, and in all cases we must pay our apprenticeship by errors ; in this instance she was guilty of a very capital one. She did not foresee all the ill consequences of her daughter's reigning defect, and which was in fact very difficult to overcome. She flattered herself that age and experience would

would insensibly communicate that activity to Eglantine, of which she was deprived, and therefore only chided when she ought to have punished; and she was ignorant of her mistake till she was too far gone to be corrected.

Violent methods are not necessary in general for children that are affectionate and active, because of their sensibility: a trifle affects them, and a word is sufficient to punish. Cold and indolent characters must be differently treated, they are hard to move, and they must occasionally receive shocks that may rouse them up.

The most simple penance would have proved the hardest on her. If she would not have run or walked a good pace, I would have kept her out an hour longer. When she had read her lesson negligently, I would have made her begin it again, and so of other things. Eglantine therefore, to avoid double trouble, would have been careful at first, and apparently active, which in the end would have made her so in reality, and insensibly have changed her character. Doralice, in the end, bitterly repented that she had not followed this method. Seeing, however, the negligence of Eglantine increase every day, she bethought herself of keeping an exact and daily account of all the things destroyed by Eglantine with what they had cost. In this journal she inserted a list of all books torn or spoilt, broken play-things, silk robes spotted, so as not to be worn any more, bits of bread flung in every corner of the garden, and crayons, paper and pens, thrown about and become useless. The sum total of all the things thus wasted, at the end of a month, amounted to 99 livres, upwards of four pounds sterling.

Doralice shewed her daughter at the year's end, the account of these things she had lost, spoilt, and wasted, the gross sum of which amounted to more than fifty pounds. Eglantine, who, then was only seven years old, was not much moved by this calculation; and her mother, who imagined she would be struck more forcibly, as she better knew the use of money, still continued her journal with the same exactitude. In this she was assisted by the Governante of Eglantine, who gave in, each day,
an

an account, on a slip of paper, of such profusions as she had observed. These Doralice kept in a box distinct from her own journal, and the memorandums of the Governante presently became so numerous, that it would have required much time to have extracted and cast up the sum of the contents ; Doralice, therefore, preserved them always with care, and determined not to trouble herself further about it till her daughter had discernment enough to understand her intention.

Mean time every new day gave new proofs that Eglantine's indolence rather increased than diminished. She used often to walk in the Bois de Boulogne * where in less than four months, she lost as many jewels as had cost between fifty and sixty guineas. This time a ring, the next a golden thimble, and the following a medallion, without reckoning handkerchiefs and gloves left upon the grass. Besides which, she regularly tore a fan a day, and broke sometimes the glass, and sometimes the main-spring of her watch, till watch-maker's accounts increased beyond bounds.

Her expenditure increased in winter. Eglantine, like all indolent people, was exceedingly chilly, would sit with her head over the fire, and let any thing fall into it she happened to have in her hand. Her muffs, frocks, and petticoats were burnt, and her wardrobe was new once a month. When her masters came, she had almost always a head-ach that would not permit her to take lessons, and the teacher was obliged to leave her, carrying his ticket however with him.

Eglantine now begun to quit her state of infancy, and approached her tenth year, and her mamma provided new masters for her. Weary of the harpsichord, on which she had made no progress, she owned at last she had an invincible dislike to the instrument and pretended she had a desire to learn the lute. Doralice permitted her to quit the harpsichord, though she had begun to practise it at five years old, and indulged her with a master on the lute. The money, therefore, that had

* *A wood, or rather a kind of park, near Paris.*

been paid the teacher, and for the harpsichord, the pianoforte, the music books, and tuning the instruments, was all lost when Eglantine gave over learning; and Doralice added this sum, which was not less than three hundred guineas, to the account. She did not continue above a year at the lute; her master, tired with her want of industry, left her. The guittar was then begun with the like success, which was again abandoned for the harp.

Eglantine had various other masters to teach her drawing, geography, English, Italian, writing, dancing, and singing, besides a musician to accompany her on the violin; and all these masters cost nineteen or twenty guineas a month, while the indolent Eglantine reaped little or no benefit, and the expences of her mamma on her account were almost without bounds. Every two or three months her music, her books, her maps, were all torn, and new ones were bought. Her harp was left carelessly in the damp and open air, and wanted new stringing continually; and more than four times as much as would have been necessary to a careful girl, was spent in every little thing she stood in need of.

As indolence rendered all kind of order insupportable to her, she was a shameful slattern. In two years time her apartment had been twice new furnished; her caps were thrown upon every chair in the room, which they filled with powder and pomatum; her pins were scattered about the floor, and frocks and skirts were covered over with spots of crayons, ink, and wax.

All these circumstances concurred to spoil one of the prettiest figures in the world. Eglantine spent a vast deal of time at her toilette, on account of the extreme slowness of all her motions, and yet no person could be more awkwardly dressed; she looked without observing, she acted without thinking, and took no delight in any possible occupation. She was totally deficient in grace; she never could subject herself to the trouble of wearing gloves, and her hands were red and rough: her feet spread,

spread, and she walked with a shuffling gait, because she always went slipshod.

Doralice had taken pleasure in forming a charming library for her, hoping it might inspire her with a love of reading. 'Tis true, that in obedience to her mother she read at her toilette, and in the afternoon : that is to say, she held a book in her hand ; for she looked with so little attention it was not possible to gain the least instruction. And thus was she, at sixteen, the more inexcusably ignorant, in that no money or pains had been spared in her education ; she neither knew history, geography, nor even how to spell ; she was incapable of writing a letter, or making an extract : and though she had been taught arithmetic ten years, a child of eight years old would reckon in general better than she could.

About this time a young gentleman procured an introduction to Doralice, called the Viscount d'Arzelle ; he was three-and-twenty, and as singularly distinguished for wit, virtues, and reputation, as for birth, fortune, and personal accomplishments. He appeared to have a strong desire to please Doralice, and obtain her friendship ; he felt the worth of her simplicity of manners, her gentleness and perfect equality of temper, and was delighted with her turn of conversation, equally natural, noble, solid, and agreeable. He had often met her at the house of a relation, and paid her several visits before he saw Eglantine.

Doralice at last invited the Viscount to supper, and at nine o'clock Eglantine entered the apartment. Her mother had that day presided at her toilette : she had nothing studied in her dress, but her hair did not hang about her ears, her neck was not covered with powder and pomatum, and her hands were washed.

The Viscount examined her with great attention : the first moment he found her a perfect beauty, the next he saw she did not possess a single grace, and in less than a quarter of an hour he thought no more of her, but even forgot she was in the room.

He

He nevertheless continued assiduously to visit Doralice; and one day, finding her alone, spoke with so much confidence, that Doralice was authorised to ask if he intended to marry. Yes, madam, replied he; but though my parents leave me an absolute liberty of choice, I feel I cannot easily decide. It is not interest or ambition that can determine me; and a blind passion would only make me guilty of follies. I would marry, not to acquire more wealth, or greater importance, but, to be happy; it is therefore necessary I should find a person perfectly well educated, and who has virtue, grace, and understanding; it is also necessary her parents should be estimable, that I may cherish and respect them; and that her mother, for example, should possess all those qualities by which you are distinguished, since she will be the guide and Mentor of my wife.

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of a visitor. Some days after, Doralice learnt the Viscount had instructed one of his people to privately question her servants concerning Eglantine; and that he had moreover addressed himself personally to several of her teachers, from whom he had learnt with little difficulty the exact truth; and so explicitly, that he no longer had the least room to doubt, of Eglantine's having received little or no benefit from the expensive and distinguished education bestowed upon her.

From this moment the Viscount's visits to Doralice became less frequent, and were soon entirely dropped. Certain he would have married Eglantine, had she been more amiable, Doralice most sincerely regretted the loss of so advantageous and brilliant an establishment, and which the merit alone of the Viscount would have made her prefer to all others.

Indolent, however, and insensible as Eglantine had hitherto been, she could not see and listen to the Viscount d'Arzelle entirely without emotion. There was scarce a young man in France of so manly and beautiful a person, such engaging manners, or so entertaining and intelligent in conversation. Eglantine felt something
P more

more than a bare wish to please, to appear graceful when he was present ; but a consciousness of inability, and the inveterate power of habit were not so easily overcome, struggles of infant love were unequal to the mature and full grown force of idleness. The Viscount came no more, and a languid regret, spent in feeble and ineffectual sighs, remained.

The grief of Doralice was far more poignant : Eglantine was seventeen, and still had all the teachers usually discarded at fourteen. She detested employment of every kind ; but, as her heart was good, and as she really loved her mother, she sometimes would make an effort to please her. This motive, added to the sensations the Viscount had inspired, gave her a short interval of industry, during which she astonished every body with the capacity and genius she discovered ; the maternal and kind heart of Doralice expanded with hope and joy ; but, alas ! this happiness was of short duration. Eglantine insensibly fell into her former apathy ; she felt her errors confusedly, and this sensation rather inspired despair than gave new vigour. Little, accustomed to reflection, she knew not how ungratefully she repaid the tender cares of her mother. ‘ It is true,’ she would say, ‘ I put my parents to much useless expence, but this expence will not be felt by a man so rich as my father, I am young, rich, and, as some people say, handsome, surely I may be excused the acquirements they talk so much about.’ — She might as well have said, ‘ Surely I may be excused gratitude to my parents, making myself and others happy, and being lovely and beloved.’ Thus foolishly will an incapacity for proper reflection make us reason.

Her want of a wish to please and obtain the approbation of others, incurred a total want of respect towards her in the family ; the servants and friends of Doralice always treated her as a child, and she was so inattentive and so singularly insipid, for want of observing, and said things so ill timed and out of place, that she was disagreeable, tiresome, and troublesome to society.

All

All constraint was insupportable to her, and every thing was to her constraint; the customs of the world seemed tyrannical; civility was irksome, and she was never at ease but in the company of inferior and ignorant people. Far from seeking the advice she stood in need of, she dreaded, because she found she had not the power to follow it; and when Doralice repeated at any time the inconveniencies of her own character, she listened with more vexation than repentance. Such conversation always occasioned an embarrassment and moodiness in her which she could neither vanquish nor dissemble. Accustomed cowardly to yield to these impressions, and having no command of her temper, she rather chose to aggravate her faults than take the trouble to correct them.

While she thus acquired new defects, she did not lose those of her childhood; she had received an allowance for two years past, as considerable as if we had been married, and yet she was always ill provided and in debt.

At last she attained her eighteenth year; a happy æra for her, because then she was to be entirely freed from all her teachers, and their disagreeable importunities. Doralice entered her chamber in the morning, she had a book in her hand, which she laid upon the table, and sat down by her daughter. This day, said she, you are eighteen years of age; the time at which education is commonly ended: I have brought you proofs that I have done every thing in my power for you. Here is the journal of which I have spoken so often; it contains an account of the things you have lost and spoilt from your infancy to this hour, as well as of the useless expences you have put me to. I have added to these the bills I formerly received from your Governante, and latterly from your woman; and I find the sum total of the account to be, an hundred and three thousand livres (above four thousand guineas.)

Is it possible? Mamma! cried Eglantine.

Besides which, it must be understood, that I have not entered any thing in this book, which was necessary either for your maintenance, or masters, when they have

succeeded in teaching you any thing. Thus, for example, you write a tolerable hand, and read music passibly, therefore I have not mentioned those matters in my journal ; although they were kept much longer than would have been necessary had you had more industry. I ought to add also to the number of unnecessary expences, all that I have paid to teachers of instrumental music, drawing, geography, history, heraldry, arithmetic, and others ; not forgetting the mistress who came two years to teach you embroidery, and the enormous quantity of chenille, silk, spangles, sattin, and velvet wasted, without ever producing a work that could be worn.

But a hundred thousand livres ! said Eglantine—It is scarcely conceivable, mamma !

Your surprise will cease, answered Doralice, if you will recollect what I have repeated a thousand times, that there is no expence, however trifling, but the repetition of it may become exorbitant, and of course ruinous ; a single example will shew you the truth of this. You have two watches ; ever since you were eight years old to the present moment, you have scarcely missed a fortnight in which you have not sent them to the watch-maker or jeweller's, either to have new glasses, new dial-plates, or inward repairs : now a diamond fell out, and another time the minute-hand was lost, so that not a month has passed in which those watches have not cost three crowns to keep them in order ; and there have been many in which they came to three or four guineas ; insomuch that during the ten years, the bills for that sole article amount to one hundred and eight guineas. When we remember the various uses to which money may be employed, we ought to think of such wastefulness with great regret. The hundred and three thousand francs you have spent would have made twenty unfortunate families happy for life.

This last reflection cut Eglantine to the heart. The Viscount d'Arzelle had left an uneasy, an irksome remembrance of her own want of worth upon her mind, which indolence itself could not erase, and made her
more

more susceptible, more liable to be roused from her apathy. How intolerably culpable am I, said she, taking the hand of her mamma, and bathing it with her tears. But though I am without knowledge, without acquirements, mamma, still the elements of what I have been taught remain.

Without doubt, answered Doralice, you cannot have received so much instruction, but the seeds of knowledge must be scattered in the mind; and a serious and determined application may yet bring them to maturity, may yet retrieve a great part of the sum I have here set down as lost; but you must henceforth, if you wish to succeed, be as active and persevering as you have hitherto been idle and inconstant.

Eglantine sighed and fell into a reverie.

I know, continued Doralice, your fortune, and the praises bestowed upon your person, persuade you that you have less need of accomplishments than others; but must we, because we possess advantages the most fragile and mutable, and moreover the least estimable, in reality, of all advantages, must we neglect and despise those only capable of procuring us that praise which is truly flattering? Is it beauty that makes us lovely? Deprive beauty of grace, and what is it? It has not then even a right to please. Will riches make us happy? Are not you yourself continually a prey to chagrin, contented neither with yourself nor others? Besides—Do you know any thing of your father's affairs? Or whether he may not be a ruined man?

The attention of Eglantine was recalled, she listened to what was said last, and stared at her mother in a kind of fright; Doralice ceased speaking, sighed, raised her eyes to heaven, and, after some moments of a mournful silence, which Eglantine wanted courage to break, changed the conversation. In a few minutes afterwards she rose, and left her daughter overwhelmed with grief and disquietude.

Eglantine's alarm was but too well founded. Mondor, her father, was as insatiable as Doralice was moderate; not contented with two hundred thousand livres

(eight thousand guineas) * a year, he had engaged in immense concerns, and was upon the verge of ruin. Doralice knew not the full extent of their danger, but she suspected something of it, which was what she meant to hint to her daughter. Mondor, better instructed, and hoping to preserve his credit, endeavoured to conceal the bad state of his affairs; but several of his associates becoming bankrupt, soon discovered the dreadful disorder in which they were.

The soul of Mondor was not capable of supporting adversity; he fell ill, and all the tender cares of Doralice and Eglantine could not recover him from the arms of death; he expired, detesting ambition and covetousness, the fatal causes of his ruin and decease.

The first care of Doralice was to satisfy all the creditors, but Mondor's whole fortune was insufficient. She possessed an estate of six hundred a year, over which the creditors had no right; she however, gave up the rents for six years to pay her husband's debts, and Eglantine sacrificed the diamonds her mother had given her to the same purpose.

After these arrangements, there only remained for their maintenance, during the six years, some plate, and the jewels of Doralice, which together were sold for eight hundred pounds. Let us go, said she to her daughter, and live in a country where this sum will suffice for the time; I think of living in Switzerland, till I once more recover my estate.

Oh, my dear mamma, cried Eglantine, and are eight hundred pounds all you have left! What a cutting thought for me, when I remember the sums I have squandered.

Think of that no more, said Doralice, kissing her; had I foreseen the misfortunes that awaited us, you never

* For the convenience of those who know not the value of French money, the sum is generally reduced to English; but as inserting pounds, shillings and pence, would be too minute in a work of imagination, a round sum nearest the value is given: thus the exact value of two hundred thousand livres is 8333l. 6s. 8d. estimating the livre Tournois at ten pence English.

should have heard a detail, the remembrance of which must add an additional pang to affliction : I would have burnt the journal, and effaced every article it contained from my memory.

Never, replied Eglantine, falling at the feet of her mother, never can I forget the faults you pardon with so much generosity : my repentance is too sincere. The desire, the hope to amend them, and to make you yet happy, alone can give me now a wish to live. Had you a daughter worthy of you, she might console, might mitigate your griefs ! and can I not correct my errors, can I not acquire the virtues necessary for such an office ? She would become your friend : and cannot I, to purchase a title so dear, obtain a victory over myself ?

During this discourse, Doralice beheld with raptures Eglantine bathed in tears : and clasping her knees, she raised, took her in her arms, and pressed her to her bosom. All the transports, which the heart of a fond mother can feel, said she, dost thou give me at this happy moment : go, my child, weep not at my misfortunes—

Doralice could not herself refrain from tears as she spoke this, but they were the most delightful tears she had ever shed.

Rouzed by so many motives, Eglantine could no longer resist this impulse to reform, occasioned by the shame remembering her defects, and the consequences they had induced. She looked with pain on what she was, and with a mournful retrospect on what she might have been. Awakened from her lethargy, she thought of the Viscount d'Arzelle, and saw no possibility of an union ; which the more her heart became alive to sensation, the more she wished. Her supposed great fortune was gone, and every thing about her reminded her of her loss. There was no longer a croud of servants ready to supply her least want, and administer to indolence : the carriages no longer rattled in the court-yard, the silks no longer rustled in the drawing-room. Most of those who beheld her looked upon her fall with pity, and some, as she

imagined, with a malignant satisfaction. She happened, accidentally to meet the Viscount on a visit ; her heart fluttered, she beheld his accomplishments with the magnifying eye of love ; but the pains, which she too plainly saw he took to avoid her, cut her to the heart.

Every thing thus concurred to shew Eglantine her deficiencies, and their effects, and to inspire her with the most ardent desire to have them remedied. The affairs of Doralice detained her a few weeks at Paris : and Eglantine demonstrated not only her anxiety to learn, but her great capability : her progress was astonishing, and her change of manner and deportment scarcely to be conceived.

It is not easy to describe the feelings of a mother like Doralice, at beholding this change in her child, and seeing thus the first wish of her heart likely to be accomplished. Every day produced an alteration, and discovered latent talents ; but, alas, all human happiness is mutable : two days before they were to depart for their country retirement, Eglantine complained, in the evening, of a violent head-ach, and on the morrow was in a high fever. Doralice sent instantly for a physician, who, when he had questioned his patient, declared she had all the symptoms which precede the small-pox. He was not deceived, the disease soon manifested itself in a very alarming way ; and he held it his duty to inform Doralice, it was of a confluent and most malignant kind. This tender mother, overwhelmed with despair, never quitted her daughter's pillow, but passed four days in the utmost anxiety. Eglantine, in dreadful fits of delirium, received the assistance of her mother without knowing her, called for her while she was in her arms and continually cried, as it were in despair——*My mother abandons me !——I deserve it !——I did not make her happy !——I shall die without her blessing !——Oh, God of mercies pardon me !*

Her wild discourse, continually interrupted by broken sobs and sighs, pierced the soul of Doralice. In vain she

she answered her; Eglantine heard not her prayers, was insensible of her tears, and every moment began anew her mournings.

The progress of the disease was rapid, and spread all over the face; the eyes were soon covered with a continued and thick crust, that totally deprived her of sight. At first this accident was not alarming, it being common enough to that disease when violent; but after a while it increased so greatly, that the physician durst no longer conceal from Doralice his apprehension that Eglantine would lose her sight. O, heaven! cried the distracted mother, must my child be blind! The evil may not, perhaps, be past remedy, said the physician; nothing however, but the most watchful and strict attention, together with such assistance as medicine may afford, can prevent it. The humour must not only be drawn off by every possible means, but the patient must not be left a moment unguarded; a touch with the hand, or even a sudden turn of the head, will make all efforts of the physician ineffectual.

I will watch, I will guard, I will protect her, said Doralice: my eye shall never quit her, my hand shall hover over her, eagerly, instantly, to repel the sudden mischief!

Consider, madam, said the physician, how long and intensely you have already watched: nature cannot support fatigue beyond a certain degree. A careful nurse may——

A nurse! Oh, no! my child is in danger, and nature has given mothers superior powers to other mortals. A nurse! Yes, my child, I will be thy nurse! and heaven will aid, will look with mercy on my efforts; heaven, I hope, will preserve thee from blindness.

So great was the anxiety of Doralice, that nature appeared, indeed, as she said, to render her superior to sleep or fatigue: her eyes seemed rivetted upon her daughter, and nothing could divert her attention, or diminish her care. When the violence of the fever abated, Eglantine's delirium ceased: and, though she could not

see, it was not possible for her to avoid remarking, that her mother was continually and instantaneously present to supply her smallest want. Affected by such proofs of maternal tenderness, and beginning to fear the consequences of such severe watchfulness, Eglantine became very uneasy, and besought her mother most earnestly to trust her to a nurse's care, and give herself some repose. The physician, too, conjured Doralice not to sit up any longer, it was too hazardous, it might be fatal; besides, he added, he now had hopes the crisis of danger was past. Nothing, however, could prevail on this tender mother to desist: her eyes were indeed incapable of sleep, and her heart of rest, till she could be certain of her daughter's safety. But though she would not quit the bed-side, in order to quiet the apprehensions of Eglantine on her account, she bade the nurse to answer continually during the night, as if it were she who administered to her wants, and not Doralice.

At last, by the great attention of Doralice, and care of the physician, the humours were drawn off and dispersed; and, in the dead of night, when every thing seemed hushed and a total silence prevailed, Eglantine opened one of her eyes. The first object she beheld, by the light of the candle, was her mother, sitting with a fixed and immovable attention by her side. Good God! said Eglantine, is it you, my dear mamma! Did not you bid me good night! Did not you leave me to the nurse! I perceive!—I see your goodness!—So you have only pretended to leave me!—How great must have been your sufferings! Oh! how unworthy have I been of such a parent!

The joy of Doralice, at finding Eglantine had again come to her sight, was so extreme, that it easily overpowered a frame which had been so long exhausted: she just had power to exclaim—Oh, my child! and sunk down by the bed-side: in that state she was carried to an adjoining room and put to bed.

The extreme watching of Doralice, now produced the effect the physician had foreseen and forewarned her of;

of; that very day she was in a high fever, which had nearly proved fatal to both her and Eglantine. The latter knew her mother's illness was the consequence of an unbounded affection for her; it went to her heart, to remember how ill she had deserved such a mother; her complaints were bitter, her accusations of herself incessant, and her mind was so much disturbed, that had not the disorder of Doralice soon taken a favourable turn, Eglantine would have been in greater danger than ever.

As soon as it was prudently practicable, the mother and daughter, at the earnest desire of both, had their beds removed side by side, where each had the pleasure of indulging those sensations which did so much honour to their hearts. For your sake, madam, said Eglantine, life will henceforth be dear to me! I should be unhappy to lose it, before I have proved how sensibly I am affected by your tenderness, and that at least I have a grateful heart; yes, my dear, my honoured mother, I would live to make you happy.

Though the danger of death was past, it was easy to see the small pox would leave traces of its power on the face of Eglantine. She was not scamed it is true, nor deeply pitted, and yet so altered as scarcely to be known. She lost the finest hair that could adorn the head, her features were less delicate, and she no longer possessed that pure red and white which had lately been so beautiful. Knowing how much she was changed, she had little inclination to look in a mirror; however she could not well avoid seeing herself the first time she got up; for, as she was going towards a couch at the other side of the room, she necessarily passed before the glass. She cast a look, shuddered and stopped! Is this the face, said she, that three weeks since was praised so much for beauty?

What would have been your feelings, said Doralice, had you been weak enough to set a great value upon that beauty which a moment has obliterated, and which must inevitably have passed away in the course of a very few years.

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The health of Eglantine and Doralice was in due time re-established, and the former did not lose the determined resolves she had made to continue the reformation she had begun, previous to her illness. She had additional reasons; the happiness of a mother, who would willingly have sacrificed her life for her sake, and the loss of beauty, which she had before indolently and vainly hoped would supply the want of grace and accomplishments: instructed by gratitude and misfortune, she learnt to vanquish her defects: and became as rational, active, and worthy to be beloved, as she had been idle, giddy, and inconstant.

Agreeable to the plan which Doralice proposed, they now departed for Switzerland, and passing through Lyons, took the road to Geneva. They saw the fortress of Ecluse, between Chatillou and Coulonges, so remarkable for the singularity of its situation; and stopt at Bellegarde, to behold what the people of that country call *the loss of the Rhone*. This place is near the bridge of Luce*, where the Rhone is seen to lose itself, descending beneath vast rocks into tremendous gulfs, and afterwards re-appearing, by precipitating itself in cascades upon other rocks.

After passing some days at Geneva, Doralice visited the delightful borders of the Lake, in order to find a house to her liking, where she might remain; and she came to a determination to fix her abode at Morges; a pleasant town, and most charmingly situated upon the banks of the Lake, between Lausanne and Geneva.

Doralice hired a small house in that agreeable place, the windows of which opened on one side towards a smiling and fertile country, and on the other towards the Lake and those stupendous mountains by which it is bounded, and whose summits are eternally covered with

* One half of that bridge belongs to France, the other half to Savoy.

ice. It is impossible, without seeing them, to form an idea of these mountains: they present a thousand varying aspects in a day, occasioned by the varying lights, which succeed each other. In the morning their rocks and heights are of a close colour, and the hills of ice with which they are cloathed seem like transparent clouds. As the sun becomes more ardent, the mountains take a deeper tinge and are in succession grey, red, violet and dark blue. At sun-set they seem gilt with gold, and the spectator imagines he beholds enormous masses of the topaz, while his eyes are dazzled with the sparkling brightness of their colours.

The Lake of Geneva presents a variety equally inviting. In a state of tranquillity, its pure and limpid waters reflect the colours of the sky; but when agitated, it roars like the sea in dreadful majesty. Tumultuous and peaceable by turns, it attracts, charms, and astonishes the eye, by appearances continually new.

Eglantine was never weary of these ravishing prospects. How insipid, said she, does every thing I have hitherto beheld, appear at present? with what indifference should I now look on the environs of Paris, its vaunted gardens, and the sameness of its ornaments? Henceforth I shall despise their artificial mountains, rocks, and rivers.

And had you travelled through Italy, added Doralice, you would have despised artificial ruins likewise.

It seems to me, said Eglantine, that painters ought not to make landscapes, nor poets, pastorals, till they have first seen Italy and Switzerland.

I am of your opinion, answered Doralice. Anteuil and Charenton may inspire pretty thoughts, but not those sublime ideas which alone can insure immortality. Louis Bakhuisen, a famous Dutch painter * exposed his life a thousand times in tempests upon the sea, in order to observe the agitation of the waves, the shock, and wrecks of vessels upon rocks, and the efforts and terror

* He died in 1709.

of the distracted mariners. The celebrated Rugendas * a painter of battles, was present at the siege, bombardment, capture, and pillage of Augsburg, where he often braved death, that he might consider at leisure the effects of balls and bombs, and all the horrors of an assault. He has been seen designing in the midst of carnage, and producing drawings executed with as much care as if he had been at ease in his study. Vander Meulen † followed Louis XIV. in all his wars, drew the plan of fortified towns and their environs upon the spot, with the various marches, encampments, halts, and skirmishes of the army, that he might paint with truth and nature his historical pictures of that prince.

Such is the activity and courage which a noble emulation can give; but when the trifling praise of the moment is preferred to this true glory, there is little need of abilities or instruction; to visit, intrigue, cabal, and form parties is far more necessary. There are many who print and write coldly and unnaturally, consequently ill, who yet obtain the praise of a day, though indeed, such people generally do justice to themselves in not pushing their ambition further.

Eglantine now began to listen to her mother with unusual delight: formerly insensible to the charms of conversation, her indolence and absence of mind prevented her from joining in it; but her misfortunes had produced an astonishing revolution, her character was absolutely changed, she reflected, felt, and enjoyed an inexpressible satisfaction at conversing with her mother. Eager to make some amends for the vexation she had formerly given her by being indolent, she acquired an industry which soon became habitual. Reading, drawing, and music,

* He died in 1742. Having for some time lost the use of his right hand by a hurt, he practised with his left, and succeeded to perfection. See—*Extraits des differens ouvrage, publics sur la vie des Peintres, par M. P. D. L. F.* This work is in two volumes, and much esteemed.

† He died at Paris in 1690.

employed

employed all her time; and study and work, far from being irksome, were her best amusements; delighted and surprized at her own progress, her daily improvement became her daily pleasure.

As two people may live in affluence upon five hundred crowns (125*l.*) a year, she did not even perceive the loss of fortune. Her house was commodious, her apartment charming: she could sit at her table and see the Lake and mountains, and she found that prospect could well supply the loss of the insignificant Seine, and the noisy Boulevards. Her table fare was better than in her days of opulence; fruit, game, the delicious dairies of Switzerland, and the excellent fish of the Lake, left her nothing to wish. The neighbourhood of Morges and Lausanne likewise afforded that kind of society which is most desirable. In this happy country, which luxury has not yet corrupted, the purest simplicity of manners reigns, and the women are equally amiable, well informed and virtuous.

Doralice and her daughter often went to Lausanne, where they made an acquaintance with a young widow, whose name was Isabella, and who added to all the charms of a thousand exterior attractions a delicate, cultivated, and acute understanding, a feeling heart, and all those qualities which are most estimable, and most engaging. She became the friend of Doralice, and Eglantine visited them often at Morges, and went with them in their little rambles round Geneva. Sometimes they would take long walks upon the banks of the Lake, at others they would assemble a chosen number of their friends, and form a concert, or a bal-champetre beneath foliage, decorated with garlands of natural flowers.

Eglantine soon became, by her accomplishments, her good-humour, and her talents, the chief ornament of those little feasts. She was no longer a perfect beauty, but she pleased a thousand times more than when every body admired the exact symmetry of her features, and the fineness of her complexion; she had still a most beautiful shape, and had acquired an elegance and manner
which

which best can embellish a fine form. Her dress always had taste, though not magnificence; she was seen on a first view without astonishment, but the more she was looked at the more she pleased. Her countenance was become expressive, and though she had not those charms which attract all eyes, she had those which fix them when attracted.

Doralice remained eighteen months at Morges before she could determine to leave it, and make the tour of Switzerland, which had always been part of her plan; but as she was desirous of showing her daughter this interesting country, she resolved at last to quit her little house for some time and her amiable friend Isabella.

They departed about the end of June, and went first to Berne, a town which is delightful for its regularity, and the beauty of its situation. The streets are exceedingly wide, and have a brook of pure water running through the middle of each; they are arched on each side, are paved with flag-stone, have covered galleries, and handsome shops, which make them both pleasant and convenient to foot passengers. The walks round Berne are charming, and from the terrace situated upon the banks of the Aar, beautiful landscapes are seen, in all directions*.

Doralice passed some days at Berne, and, after visiting Indlebank, a place famous for its superb tombs,* she left Berne, and took the route of the famous Glaciers of Grindelwald, twenty leagues from thence.

Of all the Glaciers of the Alps, that of Grindelwald is the most remarkable. On the summit of the mountain is an immense reservoir of water, frozen. The rock, which serves as a basin to this lake, is of black marble,

* *There is an inscription in a corner of this terrace, which preserves the memory of a singular accident. A scholar on horseback fell from the top of a terrace a hundred and twenty feet; the horse was killed, and the man had only his legs both broken. He lived forty years afterwards, became a minister, and died in 1694.*

streaked

streaked with white, and the sides and declivities are beautifully variegated. The superfluous waters of the lake and of the ice which lies upon its surface, as they flow down an inclined plain, form what is particularly called the Glaciers, or that vast assemblance of ice in pyramids with which the declivity of the mountain is hung. Nothing can equal the brilliancy of this amphitheatre, which is covered with obelisks and towers, seemingly of the purest crystal, that raise their heads in the air to the height of thirty or forty feet. When the sun darts its rays upon this pyramidical forest of icicles, it begins to exhale, and casts forth a light so dazzling as scarcely to be sustained by the eyes. On each side of the valley is a mountain covered with verdure and fir trees.

After seeing Grindelwald, Doralice and Eglantine continued their journey through the interior parts of Switzerland, and being desirous of knowing the author of the Death of Abel, they went to Zurich. Here they beheld that great poet, who was so much the more interesting, in that he owed much of his success to the sensibility of his heart and the purity of his manners. Had he loved great cities, had he not lived in the most delicious country in the world, and had he not been a good father and a good husband, he would never have written those charming pastorals, where virtue discovers itself by such touching strokes, and in so inviting a form. Why have these simple works so many attractions, or wherefore have they been translated into all languages? It is because the author has felt every thing he has expressed, and seen every thing he has described.

Gesner accompanied Doralice in almost all her walks; and while they wandered along the enchanting banks of the lake of Zurich, and of the rivers Sil and Limmat, he shewed her the delightful landscapes he had drawn*, or described in his poems. Doralice was particularly pleased with the grove of Pampers, where he had composed the sweet Idyllion of Myrtillo.

* *Gesner designs as well as he writes.*

Doralice and Eglantine stayed a week with Gefner, contemplating him in the midst of his family and occupations, and still beheld in him a happy sage, a true philosopher, and a painter worthy of nature.

After an absence of two months, they returned with transport to their little house at Morges. Isabella enlivened their retreat, by passing a part of the winter with them, and spring again brought back pleasures, country pastimes, and charming walks. It was now two years since they had quitted Paris ; Eglantine had passed her twentieth year ; was the delight of her mother's life, and knew not an approach to happiness till she knew Morges.

As Doralice and Eglantine were walking one evening late by the side of the lake, they met a young man in black, sauntering slowly, and apparently plunged in a melancholy reverie. As he passed Doralice he raised his eyes, gave a motion of sudden surprize, and returned: and Doralice saw with astonishment, that the stranger was no other than the Viscount d'Arzelle.

After the first introduction, the Viscount informed her he had just sustained the greatest of misfortunes, in the loss of his dear father ; on which account, Paris had become odious to him, and he had determined to travel: that he intended to stay two months in Switzerland ; after which he should go to Italy. When he had finished his recital, he offered his arm, and requested permission to conduct Doralice home.

He immediately recollected her daughter, and seeing Eglantine, rightly conjectured that was her. Darkness, and the emotions of Eglantine, which had caused her timidly to conceal herself as much as possible, had prevented him from observing her before. He now addressed himself to her, and made an apology for his seeming neglect. The heart of Eglantine impeded language ; she had but just power sufficient to make such returns as common politeness required.

They soon got home : Doralice rang, a maid servant came to the gate, and as they entered the court, the Viscount could not hold exclaiming, with compassionate surprise

prise—*Good God! madam! is this your habitation!* In saying this, he remembered the immense fortune Doralice had formerly enjoyed; the worthy use she had made of it, and her voluntary renunciation of the remainder, for the clearing the debts of her husband.

Doralice led the Viscount up stairs into an elegant little apartment, ornamented with excellent drawings, and furnished with taste. This is a delightful room, said the Viscount. It contains nothing but what Eglantine has adorned it with, answered Doralice. She worked those chintz-pattern window curtains; these chairs are her embroidery, and these paintings her own doing.

D'Arzelle heard this with an astonishment bordering on incredulity. He cast his eyes on Eglantine, and struck with a change so remarkable in her face and figure, the one so much altered for the worse, and the other so infinitely improved, he remained fixed, and scarcely could recollect or believe her to be the same. Eglantine trembled, blushed, and felt her former sensations all forcibly revived. Her blushes were so many embellishments that gave charms to her form and face. What was first curiosity in the Viscount, soon became something more; he found himself interested by the kind of miracles he beheld; he admired the beauty of her shape, the dignity of her manner, and the expression of her countenance; and his heart whispered, the graces she had acquired were a thousand times superior to the unmeaning regularity and bright complexion she formerly had.

But her conversation still more astonished him; with pain could he persuade himself, while he heard her, she was the person he had formerly thought so insipid; with difficulty could he conceive, that three years could produce a change so total and extraordinary. Not that she spoke much; the agitation of her heart, as well as the gentleness of her nature, forbade that; but there was a meaning, an intelligence, a force, in the little she did say, that sufficiently discovered the natural dignity of her mind and the extent of her knowledge.

At his departure he earnestly begged permission to renew his visits, and the greatest part of the day following was

was spent in their company. It happened to be their concert day, and he heard, with wonder, Eglantine sing and play upon the harp ; he thought he dreamt, whenever he recollected that this was the same Eglantine whom formerly he had found so ignorant and unaccomplished, and whom, with all her beauty and wealth, he had formerly despised.

His residence was at Lausanne, which was two leagues from Morges ; and yet he heard of nothing but the same and eulogiums of Eglantine. Her understanding, her mildness, her equality of temper, and especially her love for, and lively gratitude to, her mother, had gained the hearts of all who knew her. The Viscount listened with delight to her praises. Isabella spoke of her attractions and virtues with all the ardour of friendship, and he was continually with Isabella when he was not with Eglantine. Although he now had been above two months in Switzerland, he spoke no more of Italy : every moment, that good manners would permit, he spent at the house of Doralice. Timid and reserved, in the presence of Eglantine, he scarcely durst speak to her, while he testified all the respect and affection of the most amiable and tender son to Doralice. Another month was passed at Lausanne ; at length, perfectly satisfied both by what he had heard and what he had seen of the worth of Eglantine, he no longer attempted to conceal or repress feelings which reason and honour sanctified, and immediately begged the honour of her hand.

You and you only merit her, replied her mother, you refused her rich and beautiful, and choose her when she is neither : manners, talents, and virtues, only have been able to inspire you with a true and rational attachment ; the duration of love, like this, may be depended upon. However, as it is possible one *may* deceive one-self, I must beg of you again to consult your heart, and more minutely ; take time to reflect upon an engagement, on which the happiness or misery of two people depend. Pursue your intended travels for six months, and if at your return you still preserve the same sentiments, the
same

same affection, Eglantine shall be yours ; for I have paid attention to her, and am convinced her sentiments are favourable.

D'Arzelle prostrated himself at her feet, as she ended, and conjured her not to retard his happiness ; but she, however, remained inflexible ; she was neither moved by his prayers nor protestations ; and the Viscount, in despair prepared to set off immediately. Unable to quit the country Eglantine inhabited, he wandered disconsolate up and down Switzerland, and presented himself at Morges, the very day his quarantine was expired.

At his arrival, Doralice and Eglantine were together in the little room. He burst open the door, and threw himself on his knees before them. He had never spoken of his love in the presence of Eglantine before. He entreated her hand with enthusiastic fervour ; assuring her, he would never part her and her mother ; upon which terms only Eglantine consented, assuring him that no consideration would induce her to leave a mother who had done so much for her. He assured her, this natural and affectionate conduct, only made her dearer to him. Within three days, the marriage was consummated to the entire satisfaction of all the three.

F I N I S.



